

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume X. }

No. 1620.—June 26, 1875.

{ From Beginning
{ Vol. CXXV.

CONTENTS.

I. MACREADY'S REMINISCENCES, . . .	<i>Quarterly Review,</i> . . .	771
II. GIANNETTO. Part II., . . .	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> . . .	753
III. THE ABODE OF SNOW. Part X., . . .	<i>Blackwood's Magazine,</i> . . .	803
IV. MISS ANGEL. By Miss Thackeray. Part VIII., . . .	<i>Cornhill Magazine,</i> . . .	814
V. THE CHARACTERLESSNESS OF SERMONS, . . .	<i>Spectator,</i> . . .	822
*** Title and Index to Volume CXXV.		

POETRY.

HOPE,	770	A WINTER PRAYER,	770
"TO HONOUR THEE, SWEET MAY!"	770		



PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY BY
LITTELL & GAY, BOSTON.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION.

For EIGHT DOLLARS, remitted directly to the Publishers, the LIVING AGE will be punctually forwarded for a year, free of postage.

An extra copy of THE LIVING AGE is sent gratis to any one getting up a club of Five New Subscribers.

Remittances should be made by bank draft or check, or by post-office money-order, if possible. If neither of these can be procured, the money should be sent in a registered letter. All postmasters are obliged to register letters when requested to do so. Drafts, checks and money-orders should be made payable to the order of LITTELL & GAY.

HOPE.

THE plant's first shoot was fresh and fair,
We tended it with loving care,
But keen the breath of April air,
It chilled the frail new comer.
We said, "The days roll onward fast,
The east wind's reign will soon be past,
We'll fence it from the bitter blast,
Our bud will blow in summer."

But June had half her smile forgot,
And August suns blazed fierce and hot,
And tired of their earthly lot,
The soft leaves drooped and faded.
We said, "When heat and glare pass by,
Beneath October's tranquil sky,
The bloom will blossom quietly,
By Autumn's calm wings shaded."

But ah! the dead leaves heaped the plain,
And rotted 'neath the ceaseless rain,
With, like a weary soul in pain,
The winds amid it sighing.
We heard the Winter's coming tread,
The low skies darkened over head,
"Love, Faith, and Truth are vain," we said,
"Our treasure lies a-dying."

And slowly with reluctant feet,
We left the snowdrift's winding-sheet,
Where lay the promise, pure and sweet,
To youth's gay morning given.
Then, angel-like, Hope whispered low,
"Life lingers 'neath yon saving snow,
On through the seasons patient go,
God keeps your flower in Heaven."

All the Year Round.

"TO HONOUR THEE, SWEET MAY!"
Wordsworth.

How fares it with thee, heart, to-day,
When all around thee blooms the May?
This year of grace, this "seventy-five;"
Say, does it see thee grow and thrive?
The banker's balance safe and large,
No thought of stint, but ample marge?
Choice books, choice vines, a fair estate,
With hope of more at no long date,
A Faed, a Millais now and then,
A month in Italy again;
Admirers, flatterers, more and more,
And invitations by the score?
Is this thy wish while blooms the May?
'Tis this for which the many pray.

Or rather, looking on this strife,
Feel'st thou abundance is not life?
Wealth it is good, but is not all;
That plenty, if abused, will pall?
Canst thou in this delicious May
Remember Winter's brief, dull day,
Remember life will pass away?
Know'st thou more certainly each year
We are on trial, strangers here, —
Tenants of no abiding home,
Heirs of a treasure still to come?
Whate'er He deems it best to send,
Canst thou thank God? — for each true friend
For converse high, for beaming grace,
And care-dispelling, tranced face?
For mind, for health, for power to work,
For blessings that in small things lurk?
Primrose and cowslip, bathed in dew,
Fresh from the meads, and plucked for you,
Thy happy little children's gift, —
Can these thy better part uplift
To Him who glorifies thy lot
With what "the fortunate have not"?
Then cheerly on from day to day,
And thank Him for the flowering May.
FRANCIS ST. JOHN THACKERAY.
Eton College, May 26.

A WINTER PRAYER.

[Contributed to the *Waif*, a paper published for the
Orange (N.Y.) Orphan Asylum.]

COME through the gloom of clouded skies,
The slow, dim rain and fog athwart:
Through east winds keen with wrong and lies,
Come and revive my hopeless heart.

Come through the sickness and the pain,
The sore unrest that tosses still,
The aching dark that hides the gain,
Come and arouse my fainting will.

Come through the prate of foolish words,
The science with no God behind;
Through all the pangs of untuned chords,
Speak wisdom to my shaken mind.

Through all the fears that spirits bow,
Of what hath been, or may befall,
Come down and talk with me, for thou
Canst tell me all about them all.

Lord, hear my sad, lone heart entreat,
Heart of all joys, below, above!
One minute let me kiss thy feet
And name the names of those I love.
GEORGE MACDONALD.

From The Quarterly Review.

MACREADY'S REMINISCENCES.*

THE condition of a great actor's work is that it dies with him. Let him have put into it all that life-long observation and study, quickened by the creative energy of genius, can produce, he must still be content to forego the natural yearning of the artist for a hold upon the hearts and minds of a future day. With the kindred spirits, who "rule us from their tombs," he knows he can never rank. As Alfred de Musset has said of them —

Jamais l'affreuse nuit les prend tout entiers.

But with him it is different. Who shall preserve from oblivion that magic of voice, that charm of form, of look, of gesture, through which his soul has spoken to his fellow-men with such resistless eloquence? Yet is he not without his consolations. No noble influence is ever wholly lost; and he may find compensation for the short-lived doom of his noblest creations in the assurance that the power of his genius, which has been reflected to him in the palpable emotion or ringing plaudits of his audience, has opened up to them a world of poetry and emotion, which but for him they would never have known. His "so potent art" has awakened them to a knowledge of their own hearts. It has widened the sphere of their sympathies; flashed light upon the conceptions of the greatest poets, which has made them living realities, even for the unimaginative; and in doing this it has communicated impulses which may exercise a lasting influence for good on the lives of thousands. Happier, too, than many great poets and artists, the great actor has not to wait for his fame. It meets him face to face in the eager eyes, the hushed breath, the triumphant acclaim of his contemporaries. Not in vain has he lived, who owes such success to having wrought with a pure aim in turning to the highest account the special gift of genius. Even though his work die with him, he may comfort him-

self with the thought that its excellence lingers long in the traditions of the world, and that he will at least remain — how few even of the greatest do more? — the shadow of a mighty name.

Great actors as a rule have accepted this condition of their existence cheerfully. They have not sought to keep their name and fame before the world by autobiographies or memoirs, but have left themselves and their merits to be dealt with by other pens than their own. In truth, there is little to awaken interest in the story of an actor's life. The successive steps in his career, the long apprenticeship in the practical study of his art, the passage from stage to stage, the gradual rise to eminence and fortune, all so interesting to himself, can have no attraction for any reasonable creature. The mature fruit of his toils, his impersonations, into which he throws himself with all that study and experience have taught him, it is with these alone that the public have any concern. The true artist on the stage, as elsewhere, will, above all, be a gentleman; and as he will shrink in his life from that vulgar curiosity (never more rife than in the present day) which seeks to penetrate into the private history and habits of those who, by the necessity of their vocation, live much in the public eye, he will be no less chary of ministering to this curiosity when he has passed away, and it can no longer wound his feelings or outrage his self-respect.

Hence it is that the greatest actors have added little to biographical literature. The most illustrious of our own stage, Betterton, Booth, Quin, Garrick, Barry, the Kembles, Young, have all kept silence. Some, if not all of these could write well; and Garrick, the ablest of them all, had, as his letters testify, the very qualities to make him pre-eminent in this branch of literature. It is impossible not to regret that he had not found time to devote himself to it. What memoirs might he not have written! Of himself he would probably have told us little. But what sketches of manners might we not then have had! What anecdotes; what conversations of Beauclerk, of Johnson, of Goldsmith, of Rey-

* *Macready's Reminiscences, and Selections from his Diaries.* Edited by Sir Frederick Pollock, Bart., one of his Executors. 2 Vols. 8vo. London, 1875.

nolds, of Burke and Chatham; of Diderot, Maupertius, of D'Holbach, and all the brilliant society of Paris! What pictures of the leading men and women of his time; and there were few whom he did not know! Above all, how might he have set in all the hues of life before us his great compeers on the stage — Quin, Macklin, Powell, Barry, Mossop, Sheridan, Weston, King, Mrs. Woffington, Mrs. Cibber, Kitty Clive, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Abington, — doing for them what Colley Cibber has done for Betterton, for Mountfort and Bracegirdle. What invaluable lessons should we not then have had in dramatic criticism! What hints to make the stage, as it ought to be, a school of manners and of high thinking, as well as the most delightful of all amusements!

The great actors of France, it is true — Le Kain, Préville, Molé, Talma, and others — have left written records behind them. But in them little is to be found of their personal history. It is of their art and not of themselves they write; their memoirs being confined almost exclusively to illustrations of what the stage is capable, conveyed either in examples taken from other actors, or in general propositions for the guidance of those who may have to practise or to criticise the actor's art. Nor could better guides to a just appreciation of that art be desired. They were proud of it; for they regarded it from the same high point of view as Voltaire, when he said of a genius for it, that it was "*le plus beau, le plus rare, et le plus difficile des talents.*" It was an art which in its perfection could only come of "the gifts that God gives." It could not, as the great comedian Préville wrote, be taught: "A man must be born an actor, and then it is not a master he needs, but a guide." Mlle. Clairon, though herself open to the charge of too artificial a style — "*elle est trop actrice,*" was Garrick's comprehensive criticism, — was equally clear on this point. "I am aware of no rules," she writes, "no traditions, that are capable of imparting all those qualities of mind and sensibility which are indispensable for the production of a great actor; I know of no rule

by which one can learn to *think, to feel*; nature alone can give those faculties, which study, advice, and time, may serve to develop." * But, though teaching could not make a fine actor, he was not therefore to dispense with culture and study. "Fill yourselves with knowledge," Clairon says elsewhere; "be unremitting in the search for truth; by dint of care, of study, make yourselves worthy to educate your public, and constrain them to own that you profess the most difficult of all the arts, and not the most degraded of mechanical crafts."

Le Kain, himself an illustrious instance of the power and patience of genius to overcome the disadvantages of face and figure for a vocation where such disadvantages are most felt — that inexpressible something which made "Pritchard genteel and Garrick six feet high," — writes eloquently in the same strain. "Soul is the foremost requisite of the actor; intelligence the second; truth and fervour of utterance the third; grace and symmetry of person the fourth. To be thoroughly master of his parts, to know the force and significance of every line, never to lose sight of nature, simple, noble, and affecting; to be assured that understanding is not to be acquired save by ripe meditation, nor practical skill save by persevering toil; to be always in his part; to use the picturesque with skillful reserve; to be as true in level speaking as in the great movements of passion; to avoid whatever is trivial; to make his pauses not too frequent; to let nobility of style be seen even across his lightest moods; to avoid jerkiness in speaking; to weep only when the soul is stormed and thrust in upon itself by grief; to show unbroken attention to what is passing on the stage, and to identify himself with the character he represents: "these are some, and only some, of the qualities which go, in the estimation of one from whose judgment there could be no appeal, to constitute the claim to be considered a great actor.

* "*Vois-tu,*" wrote poor Rachel, when sinking under her fatal illness, "*pour étudier, il est bien inutile de parler, de faire des gestes; il faut penser, il faut pleurer.*" — "*Madame de Girardin,*" par Imbert de St. Arnaud, Paris, 1875, p. 263.

Those who thought so highly of their art were not likely to be otherwise than proud of it. They bore within them that which might well make them indifferent alike to the prejudices that refused them the social status conceded to other artists, and to the churchman's dogma, which denied to them, when dead, a resting-place in consecrated ground. Loving their pursuit as they did, with the passionate devotion which was one main secret of their excellence, they felt it gave them a rank above conventional distinctions. They would not, if they could, have exchanged it for any other. What could the sneer at the player's craft of some well-born fool, or of some professional pedant, matter to a man who knew he could cope with the best in every honourable quality, and whose business in life was to make his fellows familiar with "the high actions and the high passions," which make a poetical drama the best discipline of humanity? Nor were our English actors behind them in glorying in their vocation. On the statute-book players might still appear as "vagabonds;" but the profession which our supreme poet had followed, and for which his best works had been written, could not be degraded by the reckless classification of an obsolete law. The opinion of society soon abolished the stigma: the actor who respected himself was sure of its respect. Whom, indeed, was it prepared to welcome more kindly, or to accept in its most intellectual circles upon a footing of more complete equality? And if in public any slight were offered to him, he was sure of the support of his audience; just as it is upon record that the house went thoroughly with George Frederick Cooke, in his memorable re-tort, recorded in these volumes, to a young officer in the stage-box, who had made himself conspicuous by interrupting the play: "You are an ensign? Sir, the king (God bless him!) can make any fool an officer, but it is only the Almighty that can make an actor!"

It naturally, therefore, excited no small surprise, not unminged with indignation, among the actors of the day, when before the select committee on dramatic

literature in 1832, presided over by Sir E. L. Bulwer, Mr. Macready, who had by this time taken rank with the leaders of his profession, spoke of it as one so "unrequiting, that no person who had the power of doing anything better would, unless deluded into it, take it up." In a separate answer he disparaged it still farther by saying, "that persons who could find any other occupation would not take to one in which they were dependent entirely upon the humour of the public." It was an ungracious speech, considering that the public had been kind to him to the full measure of his deserts. But it had a farther and deeper significance, because it showed that the speaker wanted the first element of greatness, a thorough faith in his art, as in itself worthy, without reference to the measure of popular appreciation or of money-value. It was obvious from such a reply that Mr. Macready did not view his profession, as we have seen Le Kain do, "*en grand*." His individual self was more to him than his art. Its followers were exposed to popular caprice. But what artists are not? Did Gainsborough; Constable, Müller—nay, did even Flaxman—rise to their true place in their own day? Its returns in pounds, shillings, and pence, were small. The artist in whose thoughts such things are uppermost, may be dexterous, may be popular; but without the inspiration, which seeks a vent, that will not be repressed, on the canvas, in the marble, or upon the stage, let the world requite him as it may, he will never be great.

The volumes before us are an instructive commentary on Mr. Macready's evidence in 1832. No one can read them without seeing that he had no special genius, in the right sense of the word, for the stage. Accident, not impulse, took him there; and great force of will, and a determined ambition, carried him into a conspicuous place upon it, which his sound intellectual training and high personal character enabled him to maintain with honour. Whatever he had to do, it was his maxim to do thoroughly. The inspiration of genius was not within his command; but hard study and a cer-

tain fervour of style gave to many of his impersonations something that seemed to come near it. He worked at acting as he would have worked at jurisprudence or theology, had circumstances taken him to the bar or to the Church. Under no conditions would he have been content to be lost in the common herd of toilers in the same field. But to the artist's delight in his work for its own sake these volumes show very clearly that he was a stranger. This fact, now placed by them beyond mere surmise, is, to our minds, the best justification of those who qualified their admiration of his talents by denying to him the attributes of an actor of the highest class.

While, therefore, this book will not raise the general estimate of Mr. Macready as an actor, it will hardly make the world think better of him as a man. Actors have an evil reputation for egotism and jealousy. No one ever lay more heavily under this imputation than Mr. Macready while on the stage. We have heard the greatest comedian of his time say of him: "Macready never could see any merit in any living actor in his own line, nor in any actress either, until she was either dead or off the stage." The indictment was sweeping, but this book almost bears it out.

So little assured, apparently, was Mr. Macready of his hold on public favour, or, to use his own phrase, on "popular caprice," that he lived in constant dread of being ousted from it by some new favourite. The echo of applause, unless given to himself, fills him with "envious and vindictive feelings." The words are his own (vol. ii. p. 62). But for his own confessions, as here given, the extent of this weakness would have been incredible. Thus, when he was in the zenith of his reputation (29th August, 1837), he reads in the *Morning Herald* that Mr. Phelps has made a decided success. What is his comment? "It depressed my spirits, though perhaps it should not do so. If he is greatly successful, I shall reap the profits." Mr. Phelps was then under engagement to appear in Mr. Macready's company at Covent Garden. "If moderately, he will strengthen my company; but an actor's fame and his dependent income is [*sic*] so precarious, *that we start at every shadow of an actor*. It is an unhappy life" (vol. ii. p. 88). By this rule nothing would have more thoroughly embittered his existence than a stage filled with performers of the highest stamp. No generous emulation, no tri-

umph in the general exaltation of the drama, no delight in the display of genius or power in others, would compensate for the comparative eclipse of his own star. And yet this was the man whose highest claim on the public favour was his professed desire to raise and dignify the stage!

It is typical of the same morbid egotism, that even when Mr. Macready is chronicling in the diaries here published the production of the numerous poetical plays, which were the glory of his management at Covent Garden and Drury Lane, it is only of his own share in them he speaks. No one would ever suppose that they were supported by a body of performers scarcely inferior to himself, and to whom, at all events, quite as much as to himself, their success was due. In truth, Mr. Macready could "bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne." If the main interest of any of the new pieces he produced was found on rehearsal or in performance not to centre in himself, it lost its interest for him. This was often alleged of him by both authors and actors; his own diaries "give it proof." Thus, when Bulwer's comedy of "Money" is first put into his hands, he is charmed with it. He reads it to the Haymarket company (24th October, 1840). "It was quite successful," he notes, "with them." A few days of rehearsals change the aspect of everything. "As I write," he says (4th November), "doubts and misgivings rise in my mind. I have nothing great or striking in situation, character, humour or passion, to develop. The power of all this is thrown on Mr. Strickland, and partially on Mr. Webster." On the 8th of December—in these days a month of rehearsals was not thought too much for a new play*—the comedy was produced. By this time Mr. Macready had apparently discovered that it was not only Mr. Strickland and Mr. Webster who might have the pull upon him—so he is "very much depressed and low-spirited. . . . Acted the part of Evelyn—not satisfied. I wanted lightness, self-possession, and in the serious scenes, truth. I was not good; I feel it. In the last scene, Miss Faucit, as I had anticipated, had quite the advantage over me. This was natural." If so, then surely it was a

* "We have had twenty rehearsals of this," said some one, at the end of the last rehearsal of Bulwer's "Richelieu." "Then I wish you luck at *Vingt-et-un*!" said Tom Cooke, the leader of the orchestra. His wish was more than fulfilled.

thing to rejoice in; and those who remember how admirably all the parts of this brilliant comedy were filled on its first production will be surprised to find that this circumstance was only a source of vexation to one who, both as actor and as the trusted friend of the author, might well have been glad of whatever brought the merits of the play into the highest relief.

Mr. Macready was always ready to urge upon the members of his company that it was the actor that made the part, not the part that made the actor; and we have heard him cite in society, with warm commendation, the reply quoted in this book of the German actress, Schroeder, to some one who remarked with surprise on her condescending to perform the unimportant part of Lady Capulet, the night after she had taken her audience by storm as Lady Macbeth. "Condescend!" she replied; "is it not Shakespeare I acted?" Constant sacrifices of this kind were conceded to Mr. Macready. But what was a sound rule for others was apparently no rule for him. Thus, having played Friar Lawrence, in "Romeo and Juliet" one night (30th April, 1838), he records: "I find playing a part of this sort, with no character to sustain, no effort to make, *no power of perceiving an impression made*, to be a very disagreeable and unprofitable task. Having required many of the actors to do what they considered beneath them, *perhaps* it was only a just sacrifice to their opinions to concede so far." How little of the Schroeder spirit is here! Lady Capulet has not one feature of dramatic interest. On the other hand, the character of Friar Lawrence is sketched with subtle skill, and he has, at least, one considerable speech of great beauty. But it is beneath Mr. Macready's notice, because it gives no scope "for perceiving the impression made," or, in plain English, for what is technically called "bringing down the house."

With strange inconsistency, the man to whom the plaudits of an audience were as the breath of his nostrils, who could do nothing without the stimulus of "perceiving an impression made," affected to abhor, and even to despise the only profession in which this stimulus can be had. All through this book run lamentations at the untoward fate that made him an actor. That wretched old statute about "vagabonds" poisons his existence. It is in vain that audiences cheer, that critics extol, that honours are

showered upon him by statesmen and men of letters as the great regenerator of the British stage. He was not a gentleman by statute. "The slow unmoving finger" of a purely imaginary scorn troubled his peace. Nor was this all. What might he not have done at the bar, or in some other profession? The first satire of his favourite Horace might have taught him to cure himself, betimes, of that most foolish of all most foolish habits, which makes men sigh for some occupation other than what choice or destiny has assigned them. What a man does best may be pretty safely taken to be what he is best fitted to do. And Mr. Macready did his acting so well, that it may fairly be doubted whether he could have done anything else better, if so well. In his boyhood he was destined for the bar; but, judged by his own confessions, he had neither the patience, tact, nor temper, without which no man need hope to make his way there. A disposition like his, so morbidly sensitive, so impatient of control, so dictatorial and supercilious, would have exposed him to sufferings far more acute in that career than any he had to encounter on the stage, where it made many others suffer, who had to bear with it, as it would have been borne with nowhere else. Where else, too, could he have hoped to secure so many of the prizes for which so many excellent men have to struggle in vain? His place upon the stage brought him fame, a fair fortune, troops of friends in England, America, and France, among them many of the choicest spirits of his time, and the honours of more than one public dinner; and yet his diaries abound with such entries as this: "19th February, 1845.—I see a life gone in an unworthy, an unrequiting pursuit. Great energy, great power of mind, ambition and activity that, with discretion, might have done anything, now made into a player." Or this, on the 1st July, 1843, when he has been to Westminster Hall to see the exhibition of cartoons:—"Saw several persons that I knew, to whom I did not speak, as I did not know how far they might think themselves lowered in their own opinion by speaking to me." And yet the same morning he had breakfasted with Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton), to meet Carlyle, Bunsen, Lord Morpeth, and several other people of the same class, not one of whom but esteemed him, and treated him as they would any other gentleman of their acquaintance.

Can it be, is the question that again and again rises, as we read passage after passage of this kind, that Mr. Macready seriously meant such revelations of personal foibles, if not of something worse, to be given to the public? It is conceivable that a man should turn his diary into a confessional, in which to hold up in black and white before his own eyes his vanity, his overweening estimate of his own powers and importance; his vices of temper, of envy, of jealousy, of morbid pride; his grudges at fortune; his occasional misgivings about himself; his penitences and self-reproaches. It may be also well for him, that he should write down there his appeals to Heaven for help against these and other besetting sins. But such revelations can scarcely have been intended for the public eye. They are infinitely painful to those who would wish to think with respect of a man, in many points of view, so excellent and so distinguished. They teach nothing, because they are only one evidence the more of the ineradicable weaknesses and follies even of the wise. Surely, too, the taste is more than equivocal which dictated the publication of such prayers as are here recorded, for protection against the vices of an overbearing temper which, by the way, was always ready to break out with fresh vigour after every smiting of the breast, and cry of "*Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*." From ejaculations such as these one turns away, as one would from a private letter left accidentally open. What can be said of them but what St. Beuve says of similar pious outpourings in Madame Schwetizine's memoirs, "*Dès que la prière commence, la critique littéraire expire*"?

We suppose that Sir Frederick Pollock did not feel himself at liberty, as the executor of his friend, to suppress any portion of the "Reminiscences," begun by Mr. Macready in 1855, and brought down to the end of 1826. We venture to think, however, that Mr. Macready would have done more wisely, if, like his distinguished predecessors, he had left the story of his life altogether in other hands. But, if the "Reminiscences" were retained, no mercy should have been shown to the subsequent diaries. All that is really valuable in them would have gone into a comparatively small compass; and worked up, as the editor is so well qualified to have worked them, into a compact and animated biography, he might have added an agreeable volume to the not too numerous list of good works that deal

with the history of the English stage. Had he used the contents of the present volumes as the materials for a biography, cutting remorselessly away all that is essentially private and unimportant, or needlessly communicative, enough would have been left to make an amusing and instructive book. If he had been a little blind to the faults of his hero, so much the better; Mr. Macready's good qualities would then have stood out in probably truer proportion and relief. We should have thought only with pleasure of the old favourite, to whom we had owed many a delightful and instructive hour in the dreamland of the theatre. At the same time we should have escaped a host of details, with which the book is now weighted, of where, and what, and when Mr. Macready played; how much a night he got; how his Macduff at one place was imbecile, his Laertes, at another, infected with the vice of the court of Denmark; his Evadne, at a third, without brains or bearing; how much money was in the theatre on one night, how little on another; how, at one time, he was called on, night after night, after the play, or how, to his amazement, he was not once called on through a whole engagement; of petty squabbles, and prosy speeches—all that, in a word, may be dismissed as the merest chronicling of personal and theatrical small talk.

William Charles Macready was born in London, on the 3rd of March, 1793. His father, the son of a well-to-do Dublin upholsterer, left the paternal business for the stage, and after running the usual career in the provinces, and playing for some time in London, became the manager of the Birmingham, Sheffield, and other theatres. He wrote the successful farce of "The Irishman in London," produced at Covent Garden, in 1782, and seems to have enjoyed and merited the respect of the various towns where he flourished as a manager through a long life. His first wife, the mother of W. C. Macready, was also on the stage, a fact of which, oddly enough, her son makes no mention in his "Reminiscences." She seems to have been one of those mothers whose sweet influence penetrates the lives of their children, and haunts them like some holy presence. She died in December, 1803, and her son never speaks of her but with the deepest reverence and devotion. Doubtless he cost her no small share of anxiety, for in his childhood he was marked, to use his

own words, by "a most violent and self-willed disposition;" an inheritance from his father, in which the gentle mother must have foreseen a pregnant source of future trouble.

Macready was one of six children. The family means were small, the parents busy. So while little better than an infant he was got out of the way by being sent to a day-school. Henceforth, he says, "my childhood and boyhood were all school." A preparatory school at Kensington, where the pupils were arrayed "in uniform of scarlet jacket, with blue or nankeen trousers," next received him; and from this he was removed to a school in Birmingham, where the master, a Mr. Edgell, "a violent-tempered man," who was confidently believed to have forsaken the tailors' shopboard for the ferule and the desk, did his best to make his pupil's bad temper worse, while initiating him in the mysteries of English grammar and Bonnycastle's arithmetic. But the future actor was even then foreshadowed in the fact, so commonly met with in the lives of players, that recitation was his forte.

He learned quickly, and retained what he learned. Pope's Homer was got almost by heart; and its author became so great a favourite with him, that long afterwards he prepared for his children, and subsequently published, an expurgated edition of Pope's works. The great London actors when set free by the close of the London theatrical season, which was then a winter one, were available for his father's theatre at Birmingham. Here in the manager's dressing-room he had a glimpse of King, dressed as Lord Ogleby. The grand deportment and beauty of Mrs. Siddons were engraven on his boyish memory. The face of Mr. W. T. Lewis, the great comedian, also made an indelible impression on the boy; but of Mrs. Billington all he could remember was the figure of a very lusty woman, and the excitement of the audience when the orchestra struck up the symphony of Arne's rattling bravura, "The Soldier Tired," in the opera of "Artaxerxes." He had the much greater good fortune to catch a glimpse of Nelson when, during the short peace of Amiens, the hero of the Nile made a tour of several of the provincial towns—"a recreation apparently innocent enough, but which was harshly reflected on in the House of Lords:"—

The news of his arrival spread like wildfire,

and when his intention of going to the theatre got wind, all who had heard of it, as might have been expected, flocked there to behold, and do him honour. The play was Shakespeare's "Merry Wives of Windsor," for the benefit of a player of the name of Blissett, who had some repute in the part of Falstaff. At my father's request Lord Nelson consented to bespeak for the next night the play of "King Henry IV.," wishing to see Blissett again in Falstaff. The box-office was literally besieged early the next morning, and every place soon taken. At the hour of commencement my father was waiting with candles to conduct the far-famed hero through the lobby, which went round the whole semi-circle of the lower tier, to his box. The shouts outside announced the approach of the carriage: the throng was great, but being close to my father's side, I had not only a perfect view of the hero's pale and interesting face, but listened with such eager attention to every word he uttered, that I had all he said by heart, and for months afterwards was wont to be called upon to repeat "what Lord Nelson said to your father." This was in substance to the effect that the universal esteem in which his, my father's, character was held in the town made it a pleasure and a duty to render him any assistance.

Nothing of course passed unnoticed by my boyish enthusiasm: the right-arm empty sleeve attached to his breast, the orders upon it, a sight to me so novel and remarkable; but the melancholy expression of his countenance and the extremely mild and gentle tones of his voice impressed me most sensibly. They were indeed for a life's remembrance. When with Lady Hamilton and Dr. Nelson he entered his box, the uproar of the house was deafening, and seemed as if it would know no end. The play was at length suffered to proceed, after which was a sort of divertissement in honour of the illustrious visitor, from one song of which I can even now recollect one couplet! Oh sacred Nine, forgive me while I quote it!

"We'll shake hands, and be friends; if they won't, why, what then?

We'll send our brave Nelson to thrash 'em again.
Derry down," &c.

The crowded house was frantic in its applause at this sublime effusion. Lady Hamilton, laughing loud and without stint, clapped with uplifted hands and all her heart, and kicked with her heels against the footboard of the seat, while Nelson placidly and with his mournful look (perhaps in pity for the poet)* bowed repeatedly to the oft-repeated cheers. Next day my father called at the hotel to thank his lordship, when Nelson presented him with what he intended to be the cost of his box wrapped in paper, regretting that his ability to testify his respect for my father was so

* Surely not. The lines had the right ring in them, —the faith in their hero, their faith in themselves, which carried the British nation through the fiery ordeal of that time.

much below his will. My father never told me the amount, but purchased with it a piece of plate that he retained to his death in memory of the donor. I should not omit to mention that in the hall of the hotel were several sailors of Nelson's ship wanting to see him, to each of whom the great admiral spoke in the most affable manner, inquiringly and kindly, as he passed through to his carriage, and left them, I believe, some tokens of his remembrance.

The failing health of Macready's mother drew her to the waters of Leamington, "then a small village consisting only of a few thatched houses, not one tiled or slated, the Bowling Green Inn being the only one where very moderate accommodation could be procured." It was there he saw her last, when he set out with his father for Rugby, with all a boy's trepidations and reluctance to face the unknown future of a great public school. He fell there as fag under a very harsh master, "a young Irishman of the name of Ridge," and wrote home such piteous letters that his father more than once thought of sending for him. The mother, with a wiser sagacity, prevented this. Her boy was no worse off than other boys, and he had a kind cousin in Mr. Birch, one of the masters, who would not suffer him to be ill-treated. So there he remained — making a course through the school rapid beyond precedent, and attaining the fifth form in three years, "from which advance he began to be sensible of a certain enjoyment of his position."

It was one of the amusements of the bigger boys at Rugby to get up plays, and they were not likely to overlook the fact that the father of one of their school-fellows had a theatre no farther off than Birmingham. Here was an easy way to get at play-books and dresses, and these were readily furnished to them on the application of the manager's son. Some requital for such a service was due even to an Under School boy. It was given first in the distinguished post of prompter. Higher honours followed: and Dame Ashfield in "Speed the Plough," Mrs. Brulgruddery in "John Bull," the Jew in Dibdin's "School for Prejudice," and Briefwit in the farce of "Weathercock," a tolerably varied list, were the maiden efforts of the future tragedian.

Other excitements varied the school routine. Nothing was talked of but Buonaparte and invasion. The older boys went through regular drill after school-hours with heavy wooden broad-

swords, "their blue coats cuffed and colored with scarlet." These were also the days of one of the maddest frenzies that ever possessed the play-going public. It was only in August last that its object died at the ripe age of eighty-three, "a prosperous gentleman." William Henry West Betty, the young Roscius, "a miracle of beauty, grace, and genius," as Macready calls him, and still a mere boy, was the theme of all discourse: —

"The young Roscius" became a rage, and in the *furor* of public admiration the invasion ceased to be spoken of. He acted two nights at Leicester; and on a half-holiday, my cousin Birch having sent a note to excuse me and his eldest son from the afternoon's callings-over, at my father's request Tom Birch and myself were smuggled into a chaise and reached Leicester in time for the play, "Richard III." The house was crowded — John Kemble and H. Harris, son of the patentee of Covent Garden, sat in the stage-box immediately behind us. I remember John Kemble's handkerchief strongly scented of lavender, and his observation, in a very compassionate tone, "Poor boy! he is very hoarse." I could form little judgment of the performance, which excited universal enthusiasm, and in the tempest of which we were of course borne along.

. . . After the play, Tom Birch and myself got into our chaise, and travelling through the night reached Rugby in good time for "first lesson" in the morning.

This popularity, like all similar fashionable crazes, was doomed to a sudden extinction. When he had reached manhood the public turned a cold ear to him, and, as Macready thinks, unjustly: —

It seemed [he says] as if the public resented on the grown man the extravagance of the idolatry they had blindly lavished on the boy. [His level speaking was not agreeable.] A sort of sing-song and a catch in his voice suggested the delivery of words learned by heart, not flowing from the impulse or necessity of the occasion; but when warmed into passion he became possessed with the spirit of the scene, and in witnessing as I have done, his illustration of passages with all the originality and fire of genius, the conviction was pressed upon me that if he had not had to his prejudice the comparison of his boyish triumphs, and the faulty manner derived from frequent careless repetition, he would have maintained a distinguished position in his maturer years.

In 1807 Dr. Wooll succeeded to the headmastership of Rugby. He was too indulgent; and there being no longer the same pressure on his industry as under Wooll's predecessor, Dr. Inglis, young Macready for a time fell back in his studies. Happily he pulled up in time;

and to retrieve what he had lost, would get out of bed when the house was asleep, hang up clothes against the windows to hide his light, and with the help of strong tea, sit up to a late hour working at his Homer or Virgil. Dr. Wooll varied the exercises of the elder boys by introducing the composition of English verses, and in addition to the prizes for these and Latin verse, gave prizes for speaking, as a test of the elocutionary powers of the fifth and sixth forms. Young Macready had clearly struck him as a declaimer above the average. He assigned the boy the closet-scene in "Hamlet" for the public declamation, and in answer to his remonstrance on the score of its difficulty, silenced him by saying, "If I had not intended you to do something extraordinary, I should not have taken you out of your place." "Robinson, afterwards Master of the Temple, Lord Hatherton (*né* Walhouse), and the late Sir G. Ricketts," Mr. Macready notes, "were the best speakers." But the comments made at the time on one of the cards by an old gentleman who was present at the representation on the second Tuesday in June, 1808, quoted by his editor, while they confirm the excellence of Robinson and Ricketts, place Macready quite on a level with them. They are "excellent," "very well," "very excellent," but his share in the entertainment is pronounced to be "surprisingly well indeed." In Dr. Wooll's time the school-plays were got up "in a more expensive style" than in his predecessor's, and "with great completeness." Audiences from the town and neighbourhood were invited. The young actors flew at high game. Dr. Young's tragedy of "Revenge" with the farce of "Two Strings to your Bow" made a strong bill. Zanga and Lazarillo, the leading parts, fell to Macready.

The success was great; we were all much applauded, and I remember the remark of a Mr. Caldecot, reported to me, "I should be uneasy if I saw a son of mine play so well." I had, however, no thought of this but as an amusement, and my pride would have been wounded if a suspicion had been hinted that I could regard it in any other light. The half-year closed with speeches before an auditory consisting only of the school and the gentry of the town. My place was the last among the speakers, and I can now remember the inward elation I felt in marking, as I slowly rose up, the deep and instant hush that went through the whole assembly; I recollect the conscious pride I felt, as the creaking of my shoes came audibly to my ears whilst I deliberately advanced to my place in the centre of the school.

My speech was the oration of Titus Quintius, translated from Livy. It was a little triumph in its way, but the last I was doomed to obtain in dear old Rugby.

Another reminiscence, which falls within this period, is not uninteresting. In passing through Birmingham Macready went to the theatre, which had by this time fallen into other hands, his father having left it for Manchester. The after-piece was a serious pantomime, founded on Monk Lewis's ballad of "Alonzo and Imogene." The manager's wife, a lady cast in "Nature's amplest mould," was the fair Imogene:

As if in studied contrast to this enormous "hill of flesh," a little mean-looking man, in a shabby green satin dress (I remember him well), appeared as the hero, Alonzo the Brave. It was so ridiculous that the only impression I carried away was that the hero and heroine were the worst in the piece. How little did I know, or could guess, that under that shabby green satin dress was hidden one of the most extraordinary theatrical geniuses that have ever illustrated the dramatic poetry of England! When, some years afterwards, public enthusiasm was excited to the highest pitch by the appearance at Drury Lane of an actor of the name of Kean, my astonishment may easily be conceived on discovering that the little insignificant Alonzo the Brave was the grandly impassioned personator of Othello, Richard, and Shylock!

On young Macready's return home for the holidays of the winter, 1808-9, it was to find his father ruined. The Manchester theatre had proved a failure, and had absorbed the little property which the elder Macready had accumulated in previous years of successful management in Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle, and elsewhere, and out of which he had sustained the very considerable expenses of his son at Rugby. An exhibition at Oxford, a degree, and a call to the bar had till then been the boy's ambition. But this dream was all at once rudely dispelled. The last half-year's bills at Rugby even were unpaid. Mr. Birch, his kind cousin there, at once relieved him of this difficulty; but his father was, in fact, bankrupt, and a return to Rugby was impossible. Mr. Macready writes, in a mysterious way, of "a lady then staying in our house" who had made mischief between his father and himself, and from whom he first learned the state of his father's affairs. From her the suggestion came at the same time that he should go on the stage.

Would not my doing so relieve my father

from the farther expense of my education? My expectations did not go beyond this result. The extravagant views of my counsellor looked to another young Roscius *furor* (I being not yet sixteen years of age), and speculated on a rapid fortune.

When he spoke to his father it was to tell him his mind was made up to go on the stage. His father, who by this time was well aware of the obstinacy of his son's temper, seems to have dealt quite fairly with him. "It had been the wish of his life," he said, "to see me at the bar, but if it was my real wish to go upon the stage, it would be useless for him to oppose it." To the Zanga of Rugby School the stage was probably not without allurements. In any case, he went there of his own choice, swayed, perhaps, by the thought that he was doing something noble in sacrificing his dreams of forensic distinction to filial duty. If he really had within him the qualities to make a great lawyer, all the odds are against his having given up his first ambition. Men have fought their way to the first rank at the bar under heavier disadvantages. At once he set about preparing himself for his future vocation, taking lessons in fencing, and getting by heart the words of the youthful characters then in vogue. Meanwhile his classics were not forgotten, and this, with the assistance which he gave his father in the business of his theatre, kept him fully employed. Of his father as an instructor for his future work he speaks slightly. He had no originality himself. Macklin and Henderson, the heroes of his youth, John Kemble, and even Pope and Holman, were his ideals. Consequently he referred always to what he had seen, and cited the manner in which past celebrities would deliver particular passages. A worse monitor for a young man, who was not strong enough to think for himself, and find his own modes of expression, could not well be conceived. Every period has its style; so has every genuine artist; neither will fit another age or another individual. So we are not surprised to hear that Macready "in after life had the difficult task of unlearning much that was impressed upon him in his boyish days."

Worse for a youth afflicted with a fierce and imperious temper was the circumstance that, as his father was forced to keep out of the way to avoid arrest, he had to carry on the business of his theatres for him. Managers are by necessity despots. How hurtful to one, already

too self-willed, must it have been to find himself in a position where he could lay down the law on all subjects within a little kingdom of his own! The entire management devolved on him at Newcastle, where he remained for two months, "not deriving much advantage, though some experience, from the society of some of the players, and falling desperately in love with one of the actresses—no improbable consequence of the unguarded situation of a boy of sixteen." Availing himself of the invitation of his father's friend, Fawcett, one of the best comedians of the day, he came to London in the end of 1809, to see the best actors, and to learn fencing from the best masters. During this time Macready reports that he had the satisfaction of seeing Cooke, Young, C. Kemble, Munden, Fawcett, Emery, Liston, and other first-rate performers. It was his business to see as much good acting as he could, and he did so. Among other things, he saw the fine powers of Elliston, who had taken the Surrey Theatre, where the law allowed him to perform only burlettas, wasted on Macbeth performed as a pantomime, and on Captain Macheath, with Gay's pithy prose thrown into jingling rhyme. The first public experiment in the use of gas also attracted his notice in the shape of a star before a house in Pall Mall, "which relighted itself as the wind every now and then blew out some of its jets."

This visit over, young Macready had to begin the work of life in earnest. The father was in Lancaster Castle, a prisoner for debt, until set free by the proceedings in bankruptcy, and the task of working his company and keeping it together was undertaken by his son. All went so well in his hands, that the son was able to remit to his father three pounds a week "in his melancholy duress at Lancaster," and to carry on his theatre at Newcastle with credit. Before the season closed his father obtained his release, his certificate of bankruptcy having been granted under circumstances which speak volumes for his integrity, and which his son records with an honourable pride.

When the elder Macready resumed the direction of his theatre, his son, though relieved from business responsibilities, continued to superintend the rehearsals, and in the getting-up of the melodramas, pantomimes, etc., he "was the instructor of the performers." No wonder he fell into the habit of playing

the schoolmaster to all about him, which made him in after-years so obnoxious to his fellows. The time for his own *début* had now arrived. It was made in the character of Romeo at Birmingham, where his father had again become manager. What he tells of his feelings on the occasion confirms our conviction, that inclination, quite as much as duty, sent him upon the stage.

The emotions I experienced on first crossing the stage, and coming forward in face of the lights and the applauding audience, were almost overpowering. There was a mist before my eyes. I seemed to see nothing of the dazzling scene before me, and for some time I was like an automaton moving in certain defined limits. I went mechanically through the variations in which I had drilled myself, and it was not until the plaudits of the audience awoke me from the kind of waking dream in which I seemed to be moving, that I gained my self-possession, and really entered into the spirit of the character and, I may say, felt the passion, I was to represent. Every round of applause acted like inspiration on me: I "trod on air," became another being, or a happier self; and when the curtain fell at the conclusion of the play, and the intimate friends and performers crowded on the stage to raise up the Juliet and myself, shaking my hands with fervent congratulations, a lady asked me, "Well, sir, how do you feel now?" my boyish answer was without disguise, "I feel as if I should like to act it all over again."

Once launched in the profession, Macready worked at it with enthusiasm. Not content with the regular work of the week, he used to lock himself into the theatre after morning service on the Sundays, and pace the stage in every direction to give himself ease, and become familiar in his deportment with exits and entrances, and with every variety of gesture and attitude. "My characters," he adds, "were all acted over and over, and speeches recited, till, tired out, I was glad to breathe the fresh air again. This was for several years a custom with me." The manager's son was sure to get quite his share of all the best parts, as well as of the public favour; and so early as 1811 we find him, while still only eighteen, risking his honours at Newcastle in the part of Hamlet. It was a success. All Hamlets are so, more or less. His remarks on the occasion are much to the purpose.

The critic who had made a study of this masterpiece would predict with confidence a failure in such an experiment, but he would not have taken into account the support to the young aspirant supplied by the genius of

the poet. There is an interest so deep and thrilling in the story, such power in the situations, and such a charm in the language, that with an actor possessed of energy, a tolerable elocution, and some grace of deportment, the character will sufficiently interpret itself to the majority of an audience to win for its representative, from their delight, the reward of applause really due to the poet's excellence. A total failure in Hamlet is of rare occurrence. . . . "There be players, that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly," in the character, who could as soon explain and reconcile its seeming inconsistencies, as translate a page of Sanscrit. Dr. Johnson, who so lucidly describes the mind of Polonius, has left us in his observations clear proof that he did not understand that of Hamlet; and audiences have been known to cheer innovations and traps for applause, which the following words of the text have shown to be at utter variance with the author's intention! My crude essay, like those of many others, was pronounced a success; but the probing inquiry and laborious study of my after-life have manifested to me how little was due to my own skill in that early personation.

In 1812 he found himself cast to play with Mrs. Siddons, as she took Newcastle on her way to London, where she was about to take her leave of the stage. The plays were "The Gamester" and "Douglas." Young Norval in the latter was one of Macready's favourite parts; but he might well have been appalled, as he says he was, at the thought of playing Beverley, and for the first time, to the Mrs. Beverley of the great actress. It was one of her greatest parts. Leigh Hunt, writing in 1807, classes it with her Lady Macbeth. He cites "the bewildered melancholy of Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep, or the widow's mute stare of perfected misery by the corpse of the gamester Beverley, two of the sublimest pieces of acting on the English stage," as the highest illustration of Mrs. Siddons' power in the natural expression of profound emotion, which he considered to be "the result of genius rather than of grave study."

Mr. Macready writes, as he always spoke, of Mrs. Siddons with enthusiasm. With fear and trembling he was sent by his father to her hotel to rehearse his scenes with her. "I hope, Mr. Macready," was her good-natured salutation to him, "you have brought some harts-horn and water with you, as I am told you are terribly frightened at me." Some farther remarks she made about his being a very young husband. Had he not been the manager's son the remark would in all likelihood have been more

pointed than it was. It could not have been pleasant for an actress of her mature and stately proportions to find herself played to by a comparative boy. The business of the morning over, he took his leave with fear and trembling to steady his nerves for the coming night. He got through his first scene with applause. In the next, his first with Mrs. Beverley, he was so overcome by fear that his memory failed him, and he stood bewildered. "Mrs. Siddons kindly whispered the word to me (which I never could take from the prompter), and the scene proceeded."

What eulogy can do justice to her personations! . . . Will any verbal account of the most striking features of "the human face divine" convey a distinct portraiture of the individual? How much less can any force of description imprint on the imagination the sudden but thrilling effects of tone or look, of port or gesture, or even of the silence so often significant in the development of human passion! . . . I will not presume to catalogue the merits of this unrivalled artist, but may point out, as a guide to others, one great excellence that distinguished all her personations. This was the unity of design, the just relation of all parts to the whole, that made us forget the actress in the character she assumed. Throughout the tragedy of "The Gamester" devotion to her husband stood out as the mainspring of her actions, the ruling passion of her being; apparent when reduced to poverty in her graceful and cheerful submission to the lot to which his vice has subjected her, in her fond excuses of his ruinous weakness, in her conciliating expostulations with his angry impatience, in her indignant repulse of Stukely's advances, when in the awful dignity of outraged virtue she imprecates the vengeance of Heaven upon his guilty head. The climax to her sorrows and sufferings was in the dungeon, when on her knees, holding her dying husband, he dropped lifeless from her arms. Her glaring eyes were fixed in stony blackness on his face; the powers of life seemed suspended in her; her sister and Lewson gently raised her, and slowly led her unresisting from the body, her gaze never for an instant averted from it; when they reached the prison door she stopped, as if awakened from a trance, uttered a shriek of agony that would have pierced the hardest heart, and, rushing from them, flung herself as if for union in death, on the prostrate form before her.

She stood alone on her height of excellence. Her acting was perfection, and as I recall it I do not wonder, novice as I was, at my perturbation when on the stage with her. But in the progress of the play I gradually regained more and more my self-possession, and in the last scene as she stood by the side wing, waiting for the cue of her entrance, on my utter-

ance of the words, "My wife and sister! well — well! there is but one pang more, and then farewell world!" she raised her hands, clapping loudly, and calling out "Bravo! sir, bravo!" in sight of part of the audience, who joined in her applause.

This incident of the "Bravo! sir, bravo!" comes with a chilling effect after so much to make us think that the actress was lost in her part. It might at least have been kept out of sight of the audience to whose tearful sympathies she was the next moment to make so terrible an appeal. Douglas went off without a hitch. The great lady sent for her "Norval" after the play, and in her grandiose manner gave him some excellent advice.

"You are in the right way," she said, "but remember what I say, — study, study, study, and do not marry till you are thirty. I remember what it was to be obliged to study at nearly your age with a young family about me. Beware of that: keep your mind on your art, do not remit your study and you are certain to succeed. . . . God bless you!" Her words lived with me, and often in moments of despondency have come to cheer me. Her acting was a revelation to me, which ever after had its influence on me in the study of my art. Ease, grace, untiring energy *through all the variations of human passion*, blended into that grand and massive style, had been with her the result of patient application.

The words in italics are surely the mere hyperbole of praise. Mrs. Siddons was no doubt supreme within her range; but her range was narrow. She had dignity, grandeur, force — tenderness also in many of its phases. Constance, Hermione, Lady Macbeth, Volumnia, and characters of the same class were within her means, physical and mental. But there was a wide sweep of passion outside these limits which she could not reach. Of humour, the primary requisite for the treatment of Shakespeare, she was devoid; and in the portrayal of playful affection, and of what Leigh Hunt calls the "amatory pathetic," she wholly failed. She could, as Hunt says, "overpower, astonish, affect, but she could not win." What else might be expected from her "grand and massive style"? From her acting Macready says he received a great lesson. "Where opportunity presented itself," he says, "she never failed to bring out the passion of the scene and the meaning of the poet by gesture and action, more powerfully, I am convinced, than he originally conceived it." This is the special gift of the great actor. As Voltaire said to Brizard, of the Comédie

Française, "*Vous m'avez fait voir, dans le rôle de Brutus, des beautés que je n'avais pas aperçues en le composant.*" Mrs. Siddons had another great merit, which Charles Young tersely expressed by saying, "She never indulged in imagination at the expense of truth." Macready says the same thing in a more roundabout way.

In giving life, and as it were reality to the character she represented, she never resorted to trick, or introduced what actors call "business," frequently inappropriate, and resulting from the want of intelligence to penetrate the depth of the emotions to be portrayed.

Of Mrs. Jordan, whom he acted with soon afterwards at Leicester, Mr. Macready gives us some pleasant glimpses. The gayest, merriest, most spontaneous of actresses, she left no point unstudied, spared no pains to ensure her effects.

At rehearsal [he says] I remarked, as I watched this charming actress intently through her first scene, how minute and how particular her directions were; nor would she be satisfied, till by repetition she had seen the business executed exactly to her wish. The moving picture, the very life of the scene, was perfect in her mind, and she transferred it in all its earnestness to every movement on the stage. With a spirit of fun, that would have outlaughed Puck himself, there was a discrimination, an identity with her character, an artistic arrangement of the scene that made all appear spontaneous and accidental, though elaborated with the greatest care. Her voice was one of the most melodious I ever heard; . . . and who that once heard that laugh of hers could ever forget it . . . so rich, so apparently irrepressible, so deliciously self-enjoying as to be at all times irresistible.

What this laugh was, and the secret of its charm, Leigh Hunt has told us in even happier language.

Her laughter is the happiest and most natural on the stage . . . It intermingles itself with her words, as fresh ideas afford her fresh merriment; she does not so much indulge as she seems unable to help it; it increases, it lessens with her fancy, and when you expect it no longer according to the usual habit of the stage, it sparkles forth at little intervals, as recollection revives it, like flame from half-smothered embers. This is the laughter of the feelings; and it is this predominance of the heart in all she says and does that renders her the most delightful actress in characters which ought to be more lady-like than she can make them, and which acquire a better gentility with others.

Oh for the return of such acting and such criticism!

In 1813, the elder Macready having be-

come the tenant of the Glasgow and Dumfries theatres, his son made acquaintance with a fresh public, and laid the foundation of his popularity in the west of Scotland. He remembered with peculiar satisfaction the knot of playgoers who clustered in corners of the Glasgow pit, and by their murmurs of approval encouraged the young actor with the belief that they were giving their thoughts to what was going on before them. The theatre was the largest out of the metropolis, and the necessity which he felt himself under of more careful study and practice to satisfy the demands of an audience, which then, and we believe now, was critical as well as enthusiastic, had an excellent effect in advancing his mastery of his art. Here he had to measure his strength against young Betty, of whose energy, dignity, and pathos he speaks warmly, admitting at the same time that Betty did not study improvement in his art, and consequently "deteriorated by becoming used-up in the frequent repetition of the same parts."

Hitherto Macready had lived with his father. The temper of neither was good. The infirmity of his own, the son declares "to have been the source of most of the misery he had known in life." But when passion got the better of his father, "there was no curb to the violence of his language." Each had strong opinions; and as they did not always run in the same groove, the son very often provoked the displeasure of the father. "If two men," as Dogberry says, "ride upon a horse, one must ride behind;" and we can well believe that the younger Macready was not likely to accept the hindmost place. He was now, too, approaching manhood; and after an angry parley, father and son parted on the understanding that the latter should thenceforth live apart, and receive a salary of three pounds a week. A truce was patched up for a time after the return of the company to their headquarters at Newcastle; but with such jarring elements, it could be of only brief duration. Meanwhile the son did his best to keep up the reputation of his father's theatres, taking on himself a heavy share of the work, writing pieces from Scott's "Marmion" and "Rokeby," and rearranging others, to meet the exigencies of the hour. In the midst of his labours, to spur his ambitious hopes, the tidings reached him of the triumph at Drury Lane, as Shylock, of the insignificant little Alonzo, of the Birmingham theatre.

Macready had up to this time worked loyally for his father, and repaid all, and more than all, that had been expended upon that education at Rugby which was to prove of priceless value to his future career. Fresh disputes between them arose. Neither would give way, and Macready left home upon an engagement for Bath. The theatre there was at that time regarded as a sort of antechamber to the great patent theatres of London, "and the judgment of a Bath audience a pretty sure presage of the decision of the metropolis." The young actor stood the scrutiny of this critical public. He was hailed with "compliments, invitations, troops of friends, and all the flattering evidences of unanimous success." The rumour of his success soon spread. Mr. Harris of Covent Garden opened negotiations with him, and an engagement for seven weeks in Dublin at 50*l.* a week was the best assurance that he had now fairly got his foot on the first round of the ladder. The negotiations for Covent Garden having taken him to London, where Kean and Miss O'Neill were crowding the two great houses, the impressions they produced on him are well described :

Places were taken one night at Drury Lane for "Richard III.," and for another Fawcett procured seats for us in the orchestra of Covent Garden, to see the Juliet of Miss O'Neill to the best advantage. Kean was engaged to sup with my father at the York Hotel after the performance of "Richard," to which I went with no ordinary feelings of curiosity. Cooke's representation of the part I had been present at several times, and it lived in my memory in all its sturdy vigour. . . . There was a solidity of deportment and manner, and at the same time a sort of unctuous enjoyment of his successful craft, in the soliloquizing stage villany of Cooke, which gave powerful and rich effect to the sneers and overbearing retorts of Cibber's hero, and certain points (as the peculiar mode of delivering a passage is technically phrased), traditional from Garrick, were made with consummate skill, significance, and power.

Kean's conception was decidedly more Shakespearian. He hurried you along in his resolute course with a spirit that brooked no delay. In inflexibility of will and sudden grasp of expedients he suggested the idea of a feudal Napoleon. His personation was throughout consistent, and he was only inferior to Cooke where he attempted points upon the same ground as his distinguished predecessor. . . .

My father and self were betimes in our box. Pope was the lachrymose and rather tedious performer of Henry VI. But when the scene

changed, and a little keenly-visaged man rapidly bustled across the stage, I felt there was meaning in the alertness of his manner and the quickness of his step. As the play proceeded I became more and more satisfied that there was a mind of no common order. In his angry complaining of Nature's injustice to his bodily imperfections, as he uttered the line, "To shrink my arm up like a withered shrub," he remained looking on the limb for some moments with a sort of bitter discontent, and then struck it back in angry disgust. My father, who sat behind me, touched me, and whispered, "It's very poor!" "Oh, no!" I replied, "it is no common thing," for I found myself stretching over the box to observe him. The scene with Lady Anne was entered on with evident confidence, and was well sustained, in the affected earnestness of petulance, to its successful close. In tempting Buckingham to the murder of the children, he did not impress me as Cooke was wont to do, in whom the sense of the crime was apparent in the gloomy hesitation with which he gave reluctant utterance to the deed of blood. Kean's manner was consistent with his conception, proposing their death as a political necessity, and sharply requiring it as a business to be done. The two actors were equally effective in their respective views of the unscrupulous tyrant; but leaving to Cooke the more prosaic version of Cibber, it would have been desirable to have seen the energy and restless activity of Kean giving life to racy language and scenes of direct and varied agency in the genuine tragedy with which his whole manner and appearance were so much more in harmony. In his studied mode of delivering the passages, "Well! as you guess?" and "Off with his head! So much for Buckingham!" he could not approach the searching, sarcastic incredulity, or the rich vindictive chuckle of Cooke; but in the bearing of the man throughout, as the intriguer, the tyrant, and the warrior, he seemed never to relax the ardour of his pursuit, presenting the life of the usurper as one unbroken whole, and closing it with a death picturesquely and poetically grand. Many of the Kemble school resisted conviction in his merits, but the fact that he made me feel was an argument to enrol me with the majority on the indisputable genius he displayed.

We retired to the hotel as soon as the curtain fell, and were soon joined by Kean, accompanied, or rather attended, by Pope. I need not say with what intense scrutiny I regarded him as we shook hands on our mutual introduction. The mild and modest expression of his Italian features, and his unassuming manner, which I might perhaps justly describe as partaking in some degree of shyness, took me by surprise, and I remarked with special interest the indifference with which he endured the fulsome flatteries of Pope. He was very sparing of words during, and for some time after, supper; but about one o'clock, when the glass had circulated pretty freely, he

became animated, fluent, and communicative. His anecdotes were related with a lively sense of the ridiculous; in the melodies he sang there was a touching grace, and his powers of mimicry were most humourously or happily exerted in an admirable imitation of Braham; and in a story of Incedon acting Steady the Quaker at Rochester, without any rehearsal — where, in singing the favourite air, "When the lads of the village so merrily, ah!" he heard himself to his dismay and consternation accompanied by a single bassoon, — the music of his voice, his perplexity at each recurring sound of the bassoon, his undertone maledictions on the self-satisfied musician, the peculiarity of his habits, all were hit off with a humour and an exactness that equalled the best display Mathews ever made, and almost convulsed us with laughter. It was a memorable evening, the first and last I ever spent in private with this extraordinary man.

This animated sketch is followed by an account of Miss O'Neill's Juliet, not so discriminating but, naturally, more glowing. The writer was young, susceptible, and he would have been more or less than mortal, if admiration for the beauty of the woman had not heightened the estimate of the actress.

Two years were yet to elapse before Macready was to face the ordeal of a London audience. He stood out for terms which the managers there were not prepared to yield. The interval was spent in most useful practice in the chief provincial theatres; but, at length, his cautious scruples having been overcome, and good terms secured, Mr. Macready appeared at Covent Garden as Orestes in "The Distressed Mother," on the 16th of September, 1816. He was received with the applause always liberally bestowed on every new performer, and this Kean, who was conspicuous in a private box, helped to swell. Better still, the critics of the press admitted his claims to distinction; Hazlitt, one of the best of them, described him "as by far the best tragic actor that has come out in our remembrance, with the exception of Kean." Othello, his next part of importance, confirmed the favourable estimate. The *Times* gave him the highest praise in saying of it: "The actor's judgment is shown in his practice of employing all his force in those passages of noiseless but intense feeling, and exhibiting it in all its sublime depths, if not by a sudden look or startling gesture, yet by a condensation of vigorous utterance and masculine expression, from which few will be disposed to appeal." In *Iago*, which in after years was one of his finest

studies, he failed by his own admission. Hazlitt's remark, that "Young in Othello was like a great humming-top, and Macready in *Iago* like a mischievous boy whipping him," he owns was quite as complimentary as his own share of the performance deserved.

Miss O'Neill, John Kemble, Young, and Charles Kemble, were all at Covent Garden, and in the height of their popularity, and Macready found that he must be content to drop into a comparatively subordinate place. Kean, at Drury Lane, divided with them the public enthusiasm; and he had, consequently, abundant leisure to profit by the study of the performances of his great compeers. By this we are gainers, in a few excellent pages of description, which bring their distinctive qualities vividly before us, and which are of especial value from the pen of one so well qualified to judge. But this enforced banishment to the second rank was wormwood to Macready, whose way it was to drop into despondency whenever things did not go exactly to his mind. It actually led him to cast about in his thoughts "in quest of some other mode of life less subject to those alternations of hope and dejection which so frequently and so painfully acted on my temper." While in this mood he was summoned to the reading of a tragedy by a new author. This was Richard Lalor Sheil, with whose dramatic successes Macready was destined to become henceforth in a great measure identified. The play was "The Apostate." There were parts in it for Young, C. Kemble, and Miss O'Neill; that of Pescara was assigned to Macready. He took it "mournfully and despondently." Charles Kemble, a better judge of what was to be done with it, cheered him by saying, "Why, William, it is no doubt a disagreeable part, but there is passion in it." This was true; and the part, odious as it was, gave Macready his first real hold on the London public. Ludwig Tieck, who saw him in it, speaks of it in his "*Dramaturgische Blätter*," as a performance "so vehement, truthful, and powerful," that, for the first time in England, he felt himself recalled to the best days of German acting. "If the young man," he adds, "continues in this style he will go far." The impression produced on Tieck must have been a strong one, for he told Goethe's biographer, Mr. Lewes, many years afterwards, that he liked Macready better than either Kemble or Kean. It was, in some respects, unlucky

for Macready that his very success in portraying the villanous passions of Pescara led to his having a series of others of a kindred character assigned to him. But if this had its bad side, it also had its good; for by the intensity and picturesqueness which he threw into these and other characters of a somewhat melodramatic cast, he made more progress in public favour than he would probably have done in the great characters of Shakespeare, where, rightly or wrongly, he would have suffered by comparison with established favourites.

In 1817, John Kemble gave his last performances. Asthma, and a general decline of health, had left but a wreck—a splendid one it is true—of his former self. Of all his parts, Macready gives the preference to King John, Wolsey, the Stranger, Brutus, “and his peerless Coriolanus.” He was present at his last performance of Macbeth, and on this occasion Mrs. Siddons was unwise enough to appear as Lady Macbeth. The contrast with her former self was pitiable. “It was not,” he says, “a performance, but a mere repetition of the poet’s text—no flash, no sign of her all-subduing genius!” Her brother languished through the greater part of a play which demands all the vigour of a powerful physique.

Through the whole first four acts the play moved heavily on: Kemble correct, tame, and ineffective: but in the fifth, when the news was brought, “The queen, my lord, is dead!” he seemed struck to the heart; gradually collecting himself, he sighed out, “She should have died hereafter!”—then, as if with the inspiration of despair, he hurried out, distinctly and pathetically, the lines:

“To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,” &c. rising to a climax of desperation that brought down the enthusiastic cheers of the closely-packed theatre. All at once he seemed carried away by the genius of the scene. At the tidings of “the wood of Birnam moving,” he staggered, as if the shock had struck the very seat of life, and in the bewilderment of fear and rage could just ejaculate the words, “Liar and slave!” then lashing himself into a state of frantic rage, ended the scene in perfect triumph. His shrinking from Macduff when the charm on which his life hung was broken by the declaration that his antagonist was “not of woman born,” was a masterly stroke of art; his subsequent defiance was most heroic; and at his death Charles Kemble received him in his arms, and laid him gently on the ground, his physical powers being unequal to further effort.

Mr. Macready nowhere appears to

more advantage in these volumes than in passages like this. When no personal feeling interfered, his criticisms as a rule are excellent. They rested, both where books and acting were concerned, on wide observation and careful study. But although his active life, as he himself says, had been devoted chiefly to the study of poetry and playing, he always speaks with the modesty of true knowledge of his own powers as a critic. The standards by which he judged were high, for he well knew that on the stage, as in books, “*le moyen le plus sûr*,” as Clairon says, “*d’acquiescer le mérite, est de protéger la médiocrité*.” Knowing as he did, that of all arts his own was the most complex, and rested on facts of nature, which few are even capable of observing, he was entitled to speak with some contempt of the opinion prevalent in England, “that no particular study is requisite to make a critic or connoisseur of acting.” That acting in France and Germany still keeps a high level is in some measure due to the fact that it has its critics there who know when and why to praise or to condemn.

The production of “Rob Roy,” on March 12th, 1818, enabled Mr. Macready to make another decided upward step in public favour. In this character he broke the spell which had begun to hang round him, “as the undisputed representative of the disagreeable,” and which had seemed to weigh him down. The mingled humour, pathos, and passion of the character exactly fitted him. Its rugged heroism, dashed with the poetical element, stood well out in his somewhat abrupt and impulsive mode of treatment. Barry Cornwall, the fast friend of his after-life, wrote a sonnet about it, praising “the buoyant air,” the “passionate tone” that breathed about it, and lit up the actor’s eye “with fire and freedom.” This success revived Macready’s hopes, and encouraged him to “bide his time.” “Amurath,” in another of Sheil’s now forgotten plays, “Bellamira, or the Fall of Tunis,” enabled him soon after to score a fresh success. “Macready,” wrote the *Times*, “quite surpassed himself in the cool, remorseless villain regarding his victim with the smile of a demon.” The next season saw the production of the most successful of Sheil’s plays, “Evadne, or the Statue,” in which some fine situations, splendidly treated by Miss O’Neill, Young, Charles Kemble, and Macready, concealed that inherent weakness of both plot and dialogue,

which have consigned it, with its fellows, to unregrettable oblivion. Here, as usual, Ludovico, Macready's part, was the villain of the piece. Such parts as Posthumus, in "Cymbeline," or Cassius, in "Julius Cæsar," however, came in to soothe his disappointed ambition. But it was not till the winter of 1819 that his chance came of being recognized as a Shakespearian actor. To his consternation, he found himself one day announced for Glo'ster, in "Richard III." It was no ordinary trial, with the fresh fame of Kean in the part staring him in the face. However, he was committed to the public, and must screw up "each corporal agent to the terrible feat:"—

All that history could give me, I had already ferreted out; and for my portrait of the character—the self-reliant, wily, quick-sighted, decisive, inflexible Plantagenet—I went direct to the true source of inspiration, the *great* original, endeavouring to carry its spirit through the sententious and stagy lines of Cibber, not searching for particular "points" to make, but rendering the hypocrisy of the man deceptive and persuasive in its earnestness, and presenting him in the execution of his will as acting with lightning-like rapidity.

His triumph was complete. It overcame even those who had hitherto thought lightly of his powers. Among these apparently was Leigh Hunt: "We thought him a man of feeling," he wrote in the next *Examiner*, "but little able to give a natural expression to it, and so taking the usual refuge in declamation. . . . We expected to find vagueness and generality, and we found truth of detail. We expected to find declamation, and we found thoughts giving a soul to words."

Covent Garden Theatre had been for some time in so languishing a state, that the company were playing on reduced salaries. Macready's success turned the tide, the exchequer was replenished, and by common consent he now felt himself the leading actor of the theatre. The ball once started kept rolling. In Coriolanus he won his next honours; and to confirm him in his place, Knowles's "Virginus," with its fresh and forcible, if somewhat flashy style gave him a character which especially fitted him in all his stronger points. "Austere, tender, familiar, elevated, mingling at once terror and pathos," was the just description given of it by a critic of the day. It spoke home to people's hearts, and in Macready's treatment no play of modern times has drawn more tears, or more

truly touched the springs of pity and terror.

From this time Macready's position was assured; and allowing for the vicissitudes of life, and of his profession, he became a prosperous, and but for his own desponding and querulous disposition, might have been a happy man. He rose at once in market value. Engagements poured in upon him, and he began to lay the foundation of the comfortable independence which he ultimately secured.

Macready was a Liberal and something more in politics, as so many men are who, like him, resent not having been born of gentle blood. In his diary, on 30th December, 1835, *à propos* of the President's Speech, he writes: "I read it through, and think it is to be lamented that European countries cannot learn the lesson of self-government from our wiser and happier brothers of the West." The remark does not say much for his political sagacity; and a rough experience of American mobs, to be afterwards mentioned, cured him very effectually of his regret that we had gone on governing ourselves in our own way. In 1826, and again in 1843-4, when he visited the States, he was received with enthusiasm, and in a literal sense had secured "golden opinions from all sorts of people." The best men in the country had held out the hand of friendship to him. He had even thought for a time of settling there, and forgetting England with its mortifications, and its social distinctions, which were so abhorrent to his spirit.

Visits to Italy in 1822, and again in 1827, enabled Macready to gratify his love for art, and to enrich his mind with remembrances, which his previous studies qualified him to turn to excellent account. An engagement in Paris, in 1828, established his reputation with the most critical of audiences. *Virginus*, William Tell, Othello, and Hamlet, with the wide range of character, passion, and pathos which they involved, came as a sort of revelation to audiences accustomed to tragedies of a more limited scope, and transported them to an enthusiasm, which made them rank the young Englishman with Le Kain and Talma. When he returned to play in 1844, this enthusiasm, we remember, had very sensibly cooled. Either the actor's power had diminished, or the taste for his methods had changed. His great ability and accomplishment continued to be recognized. But it was "talent," as distinct from "genius," of

which such critics as Janin, Th. Gautier, Edouard Thierry, and A. Dumas spoke.

The diaries here published, which continue the story of Macready's career, from 1826, tell through many years a sad tale of bad temper, of angry jealousies, of somewhat unmanly querulousness. The condition of the London stages was declining from bad to worse; and, if we may judge from his annual balance-sheets, which no tradesman could have kept with closer care, his popularity was on the wane. An income of 3285*l.* 5*s.* 0*d.* in 1827, has dropped, in 1832, to 1680*l.* 1*s.* 9*d.* Then come such entries as this (October 2, 1832), "*Newspapers, middling, middling. They persecute me.*" He finds the key to his own disquietudes in Johnson's remark on Dryden: "He is always angry at some past or afraid of some future censure." He reproaches himself with exhibiting "*odiosam et inutilem morositatem*;" and to what lengths this must have carried him we see from his noting (21st February, 1833), as something apparently exceptional, "*Rehearsed with civility.*" A poor little boy, playing Albert to his William Tell, "disconcerts and enrages" him. He plays Iago, at Manchester (13th March, 1833), "pretty well, but was certainly disconcerted, if not annoyed, by the share of applause bestowed on Mr. Cooper." Well might he say of himself; "Vanity and a diseased imagination are the sources of my errors and my follies," although it was not quite so clear that they were what, in the same sentence, he calls "the evil result of a neglected youth." It is so pleasant to throw the blame for our "cunning bosomsins" anywhere but upon our own pride and passionate will. What an amount of self-torture and humiliation does a nature of this kind prepare for itself! It not only makes troubles, but magnifies those to which all men are born. Intolerant, it begets intolerance, and robs itself of the kindly sympathy that makes half the pleasure of life. On 30th March, 1835, he notes:—

I begin to despair of obtaining that mastery over myself which I owe to myself, to my children, and to society. It is no excuse nor plea that I suffer so keenly as I do from regret and shame at my own intemperance. I feel the folly, the madness, the provoking extravagance of my behaviour, *treating men like slaves, and assuming a power over them which is most unjustifiable and most dangerous*; and yet contrition and stinging reflection seem to have no power in the punishment they inflict of producing amendment.

It was more than mere jest Bulwer's saying of him, as he sat at a public dinner, that he looked like "a baffled tyrant."

This fretful state of mind was wrought to frenzy in the beginning of 1836, by the studied slights put upon him by his Drury Lane manager, Mr. Bunn, a man, whom he might be forgiven for regarding with contempt. Macready held, however, a lucrative permanent engagement at the theatre, to which he was determined to hold fast. Bunn, on the other hand, wanted to get rid of him, for the twofold reason, that his attraction had fallen off, and that Malibran had been secured for the theatre, and made the manager independent of the legitimate drama. The parties were at covert warfare, each trying to outflank the other. It was Bunn's tactics to disgust Macready by professional slights, putting him up for inferior parts, for important ones at too short notice, and the like. At last the climax of indignity was inflicted by announcing Macready for "*The three first Acts of Richard III.*" The night came. He went through the part "in a sort of desperate way." As he left the stage, he had to pass the manager's room; opening the door, he rushed in upon the startled *impresario*, who was seated at his writing-table, and launching a highly appropriate but by no means complimentary epithet at him, with the pent-up force of a wrath that had been nursed for months, "he struck him a back-handed slap across the face." A vehement scuffle ensued, in which Bunn, a much smaller and feebler man, had necessarily the worst of it. Macready was too truly a gentleman not to feel that, in this scene, he had, to use his own words, committed a "most indiscreet, most imprudent, most blamable action." His shame and contrition, as expressed in his diary, are overwhelming. "The fair fame of a life has been sullied by a moment's want of self-command. I can never, never during my life forgive myself," are among their mildest expressions.

Happily for him, his character stood as high with the world as that of his adversary was low. There were few to regret that Mr. Bunn had got a thrashing; many who were sure that, if not for his offences to Macready, at least for other delinquencies, he had richly deserved one. All the leading actors felt that Macready had been cruelly provoked, and they rallied loyally round him. Bunn

brought his "action of battery," and his injuries were ultimately assessed at 150*l*. But in the mean time Mr. Macready had been secured at Covent Garden, receiving 200*l*. for an engagement of ten nights; and on his appearance there had been greeted with tumultuous applause. At the close of the play (*Macbeth*) he was called for, and spoke. Had anything been wanted to seal his peace and popularity with the public, it was given in his frank avowal, after a slight reference to the provocations, personal, and professional, which he had received, that he had been "betrayed, in a moment of unguarded passion into an intemperate and imprudent act, for which I feel, and shall never cease to feel, the deepest and most poignant self-reproach and regret."

Everything now conspired in Mr. Macready's favour. The flagging attention of the public had been re-awakened. There was a company at Covent Garden well qualified to do justice to his plays. Charles Kemble was there; and all the town was crowding to see Helen Faucit, then a mere girl, "unschooled, unpracticed," who a few months before had captivated it by a freshness, an enthusiasm, a truthfulness, and grace, to which it had long been unaccustomed. The interest in Shakespeare and the higher drama had revived, and it was kept alive during this and the following season by a succession of excellent representations of the most favourite plays. All this tended to the advancement of Mr. Macready's reputation. His scholarly attainments and general culture were also well known, so that when, at the end of 1837, he undertook the management of Covent Garden Theatre, with the avowed purpose of making it a home for Shakespeare and the best dramatic art, the ablest members of the company and of the profession combined to lend him their hearty support; accepting greatly reduced salaries, and more than one agreeing to appear in parts much below their recognized position in the profession.

To undertake the conduct of such a theatre, loaded as it was with a too heavy rent, and damaged by many years of wretched management, was a venture of considerable risk. But Mr. Macready had every inducement to make it, quite apart from any wish he might have to raise the standard of his art. Drury Lane was closed to him, for it was still in Mr. Bunn's hands. Only there and at Covent Garden could the legitimate

drama in those days be played, and if that theatre were shut up, he must have been thrown on the provincial theatres, where, for some time, his attraction had been waning. But by taking it, he at once secured the sympathies of the public, and was able to bring his powers, both as actor and manager, before them, with far more effect than he could have hoped to do in any other way.

He had, it is true, everything to cheer him in his arduous task. The queen was a constant visitor at the theatre; the public were warm in their admiration; and such men as Bulwer, Knowles, Browning, and Talfourd, enabled him to sustain an interest in his management by a constant succession of new pieces. Stanfield painted for his first pantomime an exquisite moving diorama of many of the most picturesque scenes in Europe, and returned his cheque for 300*l*., refusing to accept more than 150*l*., which Mr. Macready records as "one of the few noble instances of disinterested friendly conduct he had met with in his life!" The "*Lady of Lyons*," produced on the 15th of February, 1838, replenished his then failing exchequer; neither would its author hear of being paid for it. He, too, returned the manager's cheque for 210*l*., in a letter "which is a recompense for much ill-required labour and unpitied suffering." This play, like many other successful plays, did not attract at first. Macready, quickly dispirited, on the eighth or ninth night, talked of withdrawing it. The curtain had just fallen on the exciting scene of the fourth act: "Could you see," said Mr. Bartley, who was playing Damas, "what I see, as I stand at the back of the stage,—the interest and the emotion of the people, you would not think of such a thing. It is sure to be a great success." Mr. Macready took his advice; and the prediction was fully verified. "*King Lear*," with Shakespeare's text restored, was produced early in the season with great effect, Bulwer ministering incense of the most pungent kind by telling Mr. Macready that his performance of the old king was "gigantic." "*Coriolanus*," admirably acted and put upon the stage, soon followed. The house on the first night was bad, and Macready was in despair: "I give up all hope," are his words. Among the old stock pieces, "*The Two Foscari*," and Talfourd's feeble "*Athenian Captive*," came as novelties; and, towards the end of the season, Knowles's charming come-

dy of "Woman's Wit, or Love's Disguises," charmingly acted, was also brought out.

In direct pounds, shillings, and pence, Mr. Macready was a loser by the season. So, at least, we understand him to put its results, where he says (3rd Aug., 1838): "I find I managed to lose, as I first thought, judging from actual decrease of capital, and absence of profit by my labour, 2500*l.*, or measuring my receipt by the previous year, 1850*l.*" But against this was to be set the positive increase of reputation and *prestige*, which secured him engagements both in London and elsewhere, that in the long run, far more than compensated this temporary loss. Moreover, the business of theatrical management, like every business, takes time to make, and practical men do not regard a deficit in the outset as an actual loss. Mr. Macready, no doubt, in his less desponding moods, took the same view, and having made a more favourable arrangement with his landlords, he took Covent Garden for another season, and opened a fresh campaign, with renewed vigour, on the 24th September, 1838.

Aided by a company of unusual and varied strength, he advanced still further the reputation already won by his Shakespearian revivals. "The Tempest" and "Henry V." were produced with a completeness and a sense of the picturesque hitherto unknown. The public crowded to see them, and proved that no truly well-directed effort to make the theatre a place of high intellectual recreation will be made in vain. Mr. Macready notes, on the 20th June, 1839, as "not a common event," that "The Tempest" was acted fifty-five nights, to an average of 250*l.* a night. But these performances were distributed throughout the season. To have run this or any other piece, however successful, night after night, as we now see done, was a thing then undreamt of. A practice so fatal to the actors as artists, not to speak of the mere fatigue, is the result of the merely commercial spirit on which theatres are now conducted. The most successful plays were in those days, alternated with others. Thus the actors, if they had not complete rest, had, at least, the rest of change. They came fresh to their work, instead of falling into mechanical routine. How much the public also gained by this it is needless to say. Play after play was brought before them, in which the performers were seen at their best. They learned to understand good acting; and

this appreciation reacted beneficially on the actors, who felt that good and careful work was never thrown away. Bulwer again came to the help of his friend by writing "Richelieu," where he fitted him with a part that gave scope for his best qualities of intensity, strong powers of contrast, and a certain grim humour. It proved one of the great successes of the season. Every character was in able hands. Elton, Diddear, Warde. Anderson, Vining, Phelps, George Bennett, Howe, and Miss Helen Faucit, all names of strength, appeared in the cast. Never was dramatist more fortunate than to be so interpreted. Never had manager such a staff.

The season passed off brilliantly; but Mr. Macready was dissatisfied with the money results. It seems to have left him 1200*l.* in pocket; certainly a most poor return for all the intellect and energy expended. Mr. Macready, at all events, thought he could not afford to persevere in the course he had so well begun, and he retired from the management at the end of the season. Of the warmth of the public he could not complain. On the last night (16th July 1839) he notes:—

My reception was so great from a house crowded in every part, that I was shaken by it. . . . The curtain fell amidst the loudest applauses, and when I had changed my dress I went before the curtain, and, amidst shoutings, and wavings of hats and handkerchiefs by the whole audience standing up, the stage was literally covered with wreaths, bouquets, and branches of laurel. . . . The cheering was renewed, as I bowed and left the stage; and as I passed through the lane which the actors and people, crowding behind, made for me, they cheered me also. Forster came into my room, and was much affected; [W. J.] Fox was much shaken; Dickens, Maclise, Stanfield, T. Cooke, Blanchard, Lord Nugent (who had not been in the theatre), Bulwer, Hockley of Guilford, Browning, Serle, Wilmot, came into my room; most of them asked for memorials from the baskets and heaps of flowers, chaplets, and laurels, that were strewn upon the floor.

The same enthusiasm was shown at a public dinner, four days later, given to him at the Freemasons' Tavern, and presided over by the Duke of Sussex. When he rose to speak, he says: "I never witnessed such a scene, such wild enthusiasm, on any former occasion." In the course of his speech he stated that his hope and intention had been—

to have left in our theatre the complete series of Shakespeare's acting-plays, his text purified

from the gross interpolations that disfigure it and distort his characters; and the system of re-arrangement so perfected throughout them, that our stage would have presented, as it ought, one of the best illustrated editions of the poet's works. But [he added] my poverty, and not my will, has compelled me to desist from the attempt.

Much good had, however, been done, and the truth had been brought home to many minds that, as Shakespeare wrote for the stage, and not for the closet, his plays to be thoroughly felt and understood, must be acted, not read.

All that Mr. Macready had lost at Covent Garden he soon retrieved by the increased value of his engagements elsewhere. Mr. Webster secured him for the Haymarket Theatre upon most liberal terms, engaging at the same time Miss Helen Faucit and several other members of the Covent Garden company, who thus kept alive the interest in the higher drama which they had helped to create. Bulwer's "Sea Captain" and "Money," Talfourd's "Glencoe," Troughton's "Nina Sforza," and other plays of mark, in addition to many of the older plays, were all produced by Mr. Webster with a finish no less complete—allowing for the size of the theatre—than had distinguished the recent performances at Covent Garden. Mr. Macready continued at the Haymarket, with slight interruptions, down to the end of 1841. While there, thoughts of resuming the managerial sceptre revived in his mind. Soon after, Drury Lane passed out of Mr. Bunn's hands, and the temptation of reigning in his stead became irresistible. Mr. Macready took the theatre, and opened his season in "The Merchant of Venice," on 27th December, 1841, having again drawn round him a most powerful company.

His return to management was hailed with sincere pleasure by every lover of the drama. "Acis and Galatea," produced on 5th February, was his first great success. Those who remember what Stanfield did for the one scene of the piece, and the fine singing of Miss Romer, Miss Horton, Mr. Allen, and Mr. Phillips, will quite concur with Mr. Macready when he says of the performance, "that he had never seen anything of the kind so perfectly beautiful." Gerald Griffin's fine play of "Gisippus," in which we remember Mr. Anderson created a very powerful effect in one remarkable scene, was produced on 23rd February following. It had only a *succès d'estime*.

Darley's "Plighted Troth," produced on 20th April, from which Mr. Macready to the last anticipated a brilliant success, proved "a most unhappy failure." The play was full of fine things. So, too, was William Smith's "Athelwold," produced on the 18th May; but not even the fine acting and more than one powerful scene could carry it beyond a second performance. "Marino Faliero" followed on the 20th May, and two nights afterwards the season closed.

During this season, as well as during that which followed, success was chiefly assured either by the admirable style in which Shakespeare's best-known plays were presented or by plays of already established reputation. "As You Like It," "King John," "Othello," "Macbeth," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Cymbeline," "Romeo and Juliet," "Hamlet," "The Winter's Tale," "Julius Cæsar," "Henry IV.," and "Catherine and Petruchio," represented Shakespeare. "Sho Stoops to Conquer," "The School for Scandal," "The Rivals," "The Way to Keep Him," "The Provoked Husband," "The Jealous Wife," "The Stranger," "The Road to Ruin," "Jane Shore," "Virginius," "Werner," "The Lady of Lyons," "Marino Faliero," and "Acis and Galatea," were also given, besides a number of minor pieces. Milton's "Comus" was given in a way never to be forgotten; while among the new pieces of exceptional merit were Marston's "Patrician's Daughter," Browning's "Blot on the Scutcheon," Knowles's "Secretary," Planché's delightful Easter-piece "Fortunio," and the opera of "Sappho." It is a splendid list, and the memory of the playgoer of those days naturally kindles as he reads it. In these diaries, however, nothing will strike him as so noteworthy as Mr. Macready's total silence as to those by whose co-operation alone he was able to produce this magnificent series of performances. Of himself, and how he acted, and was called for, etc., etc., we hear more than enough; but no word appears of gratitude or recognition for loyal service rendered, and for first-rate ability applied by others, as it most certainly was, in sustaining the fame of his theatre with sincere artistic devotion.

In the midst of success apparently unclouded, and when it seemed as if a theatre were now likely to be established worthy of England and its drama, Mr. Macready suddenly threw up the reins, upon some difference with the proprietors

of the theatre about terms. All at once, upon a few days' notice, his fine company found themselves once more adrift, and their hopes of seeing one high-class national theatre annihilated. The blow fell heavily upon them; and they had not even the consolation of being called to mind by their leader when he was receiving what he describes as the "mad acclaim" of the public, on the last night of his management. Again the honours of a public dinner, with the Duke of Cambridge in the chair, and the presentation of a magnificent piece of plate, were accorded to the retiring manager. His speech on the occasion is given in this book, but not even in it does he say one word about the very remarkable body of performers who had so ably seconded his efforts. His own sensitiveness to ingratitude, real or imagined, had not taught Mr. Macready to avoid the sin in his own person. Time does its work of oblivion quickly; and the readers of this generation should be reminded that there were actors and actresses in Mr. Macready's companies to whose assistance much of the great reputation of his management was due, for from these diaries they will get no hint of the fact.

In the autumn of this year he went to America, with the glories of his Drury Lane management fresh upon him. They brought him a liberal return for all his pains. After a year spent in the States he came home richer by 5500*l.* than he had gone there. "No bad return for what it pleases him to call (22nd April, 1848) "the worst exercise of a man's intellect." On arriving in Europe at the end of 1844, he played for a few nights in Paris, not greatly, it would appear, to his own satisfaction, and then entered upon a series of engagements in London and the provinces, which occupied him, with varying success, till his return to America in the end of 1848. This visit was, upon the whole, an unlucky one. It brought him into contact with some of the worst features of the "rowdiness" by which the great republic is afflicted. Mr. Forrest, a native and favourite actor, in resentment at some offence given or imagined, had apparently determined to make the land of freedom too hot to hold the English tragedian. When Mr. Macready, soon after his arrival, appeared in Philadelphia, hissing and catcalls greeted his entry as Macbeth. "I went through the part," he writes, "cheerily and defyingly, pointing at the scoundrels such passages as 'I dare do all,' etc." No wonder that the

discharge at the usurper first of a copper cent, and then of a rotten egg, followed this very undignified style of sending home his points. The better part of the audience supported Mr. Macready, and no further outbreak occurred. But when he returned to New York a few months afterwards, the Forrest movement assumed a more serious shape. The first night he appeared, copper cents, eggs, apples, a peck of potatoes, lemons, pieces of wood, a bottle of assafoetida, were thrown upon the stage. At last the missiles grew even more miscellaneous and dangerous. Chairs were thrown from the gallery on the stage, and the play had to be brought to a premature close. Two days afterwards another attempt at performance was made. But this time matters were more serious. Inside the theatre comparative quiet was maintained; but outside a complete bombardment of stones and missiles was carried on. Through all this riot Mr. Macready persevered, "acting his very best," as he says, "and exciting the audience to a sympathy even with the glowing words of fiction, while dreadful deeds of real crime and outrage were roaring at intervals in our ears, and rising to madness all round us. The death of Macbeth was loudly cheered." But, while he was changing his dress, he was startled by volley on volley of musketry. The soldiers had been sent for, and were firing into the mob. Eighteen were killed, and many wounded. Macready was with difficulty got away from New York to Boston, where he embarked for England on 23rd May, 1849, effectually cured of his dream of settling in America.

On his return home he commenced a series of farewell engagements. Happily, for himself, he seems at this period to have viewed his own performances with something more than complacency. It is scarcely fair to let the world see the terms of high commendation with which he mentions his own Iago, Brutus, Lear, Hamlet, etc. But notwithstanding all this, he records (26th February, 1851) that "not one feeling of regret is intermingled with his satisfaction at bidding adieu to the occupation of his life." That same evening saw him for the last time upon the stage. The play was "Macbeth," and the stage that of Drury Lane. "I acted Macbeth," he says, "with a reality, a vigour, a truth, a dignity, that I never before threw into the delineation of this favourite character." The audience were in no critical mood. They had

come to do honour to one to whom they owed much pure pleasure from an art, which they, at least, did not despise, and they thought of little else. Such were the greeting and farewell they gave him, that he says: "No actor has ever received such testimony of respect and regard in this country." His triumph did not end here. Four days afterwards a public dinner, at which six hundred guests were assembled, was given to him. His constant friend, Sir E. L. Bulwer, presided, and around him were gathered many of the most distinguished men of the day. The chairman pronounced a brilliant panegyric, and the speaking generally was good. One speech appeared in the papers, and is here reprinted, which we well remember was not spoken. It had been prepared by the Chevalier Bunsen, and was by far the ablest of them all; but it came so late in the programme that Bunsen wisely substituted for it a very few words.

The curtain could not have fallen upon a more splendid close to an honourable career. Surely all these honours, these unreserved congratulations, might have made Mr. Macready forget his old apprehensions that he was looked down upon because he was an actor. But no, the same feeling remained; though with it comes the absurd conviction that, because he is an actor no longer, he "can now look his fellow-men, whatever their station, in the face, and assert his equality" ("Diary," 19th March, 1851). He quite forgets that, had he not been an actor, he would have been nobody. The applause, the "salutations in the marketplace," so precious to a man of his temperament, would never have been his. The grandson of the Dublin upholsterer would have had no "Reminiscences" to write, no name to be proud of, or to be carried down to generations beyond his own.

Mr. Macready survived his retirement from the stage more than twenty-two years, which he spent first at Sherborne, and afterwards at Cheltenham, where he died on the 27th April, 1873. It was his fate to see many of his "dear ones laid in earth." His wife, and most of his children, preceded him to the grave. He married most happily a second time in 1860. Removed from the stage and its jealousies, all his fine qualities had freer scope; and we think now with pleasure of his venerable and noble head, as we saw it last in 1872, and of the sweet smile of his beautiful mouth, which spoke of

the calm wisdom of a gentle and thoughtful old age. We have reason to know that he looked back with yearning fondness to the studies and pursuits which had made him famous. The fretful jealousies, the passionate wilfulness of the old times seemed to have faded into the dim past, and no longer marred the memory of kindness done, and loyal service rendered to him. He had done much good in the sphere which Providence had assigned him, and we believe had learned to know that it was not for him to repine, if "the Divinity that shapes our ends" had so shaped his, that his work was to be accomplished upon the stage. It is of the man as we then saw him, the man whom we had known as a highly-cultivated and essentially kind-hearted gentleman, that we would rather think, than of the actor with all his weaknesses cruelly laid bare, whom these volumes have placed before us.

From Blackwood's Magazine.
GIANNETTO.

CHAPTER VII.

WE were careful, before going, to leave our address in England with the Franciscans, the Matteis, and the *curato* of San Jacopo, to whom I sent two or three envelopes directed to myself and stamped; and it was through occasional correspondence with all these that we heard enough of Giannetto and his wife to enable me to carry on the thread of their history.

When Fra Geronimo reached Venice, he established himself in the convent of his order, and set himself to watch.

All Giannetto's old passion for the sea returned when he again beheld it. In all weathers, at all hours, he was out, — now gliding along the silent canals in the smooth, swift gondola — now rowing far out of the town and beyond the wide lagoons, dancing on the waves, and feeling a wild enjoyment in his freedom. He was never still; a sort of burning, overpowering restlessness seemed to possess him, body and soul. He was always singing: when at home, bending over his little child, he would sing softly and sweetly, till the tears welled into Elvira's eyes; when tossing on the sea, and the wind and waves were high, the passers-by leant forward with rapture, listening to his wild and thrilling tones, then drew back within the shelter of

their gondolas with a shudder, at they knew not what.

Nothing seemed to affect his voice. When the violent heat came on, and the other singers at the opera found their voices becoming weak and hoarse, his was the same as ever—there was no variation in its power. After singing the whole night it was clear and strong as at the beginning. His fellow-actors became uneasy and suspicious, though of what they could not define; but involuntarily they drew further and further aloof from him, so that he and Elvira found themselves without friends, and with but few acquaintances, in Venice.

It was a calm sultry evening in July, and Giannetto had been out all through the afternoon. He was weary and heated, and lay back in his gondola, leaving its guidance (not according to his wont) to the gondolier. As they glided through the streets, the strong smell of the almost stagnant water sickened him. "Hasten!" he said; "an extra *buona-mano* for speed."

The gondolier smiled, and bent more willingly on his long oar. "The Signore is generous," he said. "I was idle, I was not working with a will; but times are bad, and, heaven help us! we have become lazy."

"Times are always bad in Venice," said Giannetto, irritably; "it is always the same story with you all."

The man gave a little patient sigh. The gondola skimmed out of the Grand Canal, and stopped before the steps of a palace on one of the smaller canals. Giannetto paid him, and stepped lightly out.

It was a very old and crumbling, though once fine, building, this Palazzo Lucchetti, in which Giannetto and his family had taken apartments. One large room with hanging balconies looked on to the Grand Canal, but the long façade of the palace was on the smaller street. Beautiful it was in its decay, with its walls of great hewn stones, in which the rusted iron rings for torches yet remained. The posts to which the gondolas were fastened still bore the bright colours of the old family to whom the palace had belonged, and from whom it had taken its name; but the dark water scarcely showed their reflections, the paint was so faded away. Everything spoke of sadness and desolation—of a city whose glory is departed.

Giannetto mounted the broad white steps, passed through the small court-

yard—where a few thirsty orange-trees drooped and pined for want of care—up a marble staircase, and into a suite of long lofty rooms. They were hung with old, faded green silk; but the heavy stucco ceilings, richly gilt and painted, retained somewhat of their original lustre.

Through three of these rooms Giannetto passed, till he reached the furthest, that overhanging the Grand Canal, which was Elvira's favourite apartment.

It was nearly dark, the windows carefully closed with dark-blue blinds, excepting one which had been set wide open, and admitted a stream of almost visible heat.

On the floor in front of this window, and on the balcony without, five or six pigeons, beautiful in their soft opal plumage, were pecking up bits of bread and cake; and among them, with bare feet and shoulders, sat the dark-eyed little child, Felicità. The pigeons were billing and cooing all round her, some venturing even to hop on her tiny feet, causing her to crouch with delight.

As Giannetto entered, Elvira came forward from the dark corner where she had been seated, and pointed to the child. "See, Nino," she said (for so she called him)—"look, Nino mine!—is it not pretty? The pigeons of St. Mark love our little child; they come thus every day." Giannetto thought lovingly that she looked as pretty and as pure as the little stainless child; he looked down on her very fondly. "Alas!" she said, pressing her soft hand on his brow, "how it burns! It is too hot; you should not go out in the great heat on days like these."

Giannetto advanced to the little Felicità, and held out his hands. At his approach the pigeons took alarm, and began to fly out of the window. "See," said Giannetto, bitterly, "all good and holy things fly at my approach!"

Elvira hastily snatched up her child and held it towards her husband, smiling. The little one put out her arms, and jumped to be taken.

"Here, Nino," she replied; "there is the best answer. Those foolish pigeons know quite well that a child cannot hurt them; but they have not the same confidence in a man. Sometimes even *persons* as well as pigeons think you rather formidable—just now and then," she added, her voice quivering a little.

"Not you, Elvira? You at least are never afraid of me?"

"No, no; not I. Why should I fear you? You are always good to me—too good by far; but others—I cannot tell why—many others think you much to be dreaded. But here is Manna: she has come to take Felicità to bed; she has not been well to-day. Nino, feel her hands and her little head; they are burning! And one little cheek is so scarlet, the other so pale! All day she has been heavy and sleepy, and, till the pigeons came in, she has scarcely noticed anything."

"Poor little thing!" said Giannetto, kissing the upturned face; "what ails my little one?"

"Ah!" said the nurse, as she lifted and carried the child away, "it must be her teeth. If the signora would only let me give her some of that medicine I told her of."

"No, no; put her to sleep, Manna, and give her no medicines." The nurse left the room.

Giannetto had thrown himself down on a hard green sofa, and Elvira quietly seated herself on the ground beside him, holding and fondling his hand.

"Nino," she began hesitatingly, "you love little Felicità very much?"

"Of course I love her."

"Nino, you would not like her to go away, and never see or think of you again? It would grieve you, would it not?"

Giannetto started up, and snatched away his hand. "Elvira, cannot you let me alone? I know well what you mean. When will you cease to plague me on this subject? I have told you again and again that these feelings of which you speak—these natural affections, as you call them—are those only of an educated mind. A peasant like my mother is not thus sentimental."

"But, Nino, you do not know, you cannot tell, what a mother's love is, and always must be. Educated! Why, look at the very animals, how they love their children!"

"Until they are grown up," said Giannetto—"till they are independent of them—and then they throw them off. Believe me, Elvira, your pity is wasted on my mother. I do not wish to see her; she would not care to see me,—and—and—I cannot go home."

Elvira sighed. After a little pause she said, gently, "Nino mine, do you not think sometimes that there are duties which should not be left undone, however painful they may be? Nino, she

was left a widow very young; she toiled for you, suffered for you, wept for you; and—indeed, indeed, she loves you still."

Giannetto turned round suddenly—"How do you know? What do you mean? Have you heard anything? Answer, Elvira!"

Elvira took a thin, carefully-written letter from her pocket: "See," she said—"my mother has just sent me this; she writes a few lines herself to say that, as it was directed to me, she had opened and read it. But, Nino, Nino, what is the matter? Are you ill?"

Giannetto had become as white as a sheet. He had at once recognized the handwriting of the priest of San Jacopo. He snatched the letter from her; it was not long, and a glance reassured him—his secret was safe.

As he sank back, the drops of perspiration stood on his brow. "It is nothing, nothing, Elvira," he said; "only a sudden pain. Read me the letter." Elvira was not satisfied till she had bathed his forehead with orange-flower water; and she sat fanning him with one hand while holding the letter in the other. Giannetto acquiesced, willing that she should attribute his sudden agitation to illness.

This secret between himself and his wife was becoming unbearable to him. He lived in a perpetual dread lest Elvira should learn the particulars of his early history; and he felt a sort of conviction that, his secret once revealed, their severance would become inevitable.

"Now, Elvira," he said, "read me the letter. I wonder why he should write to you instead of to me this time?"

"Perhaps," she said, rather timidly—"perhaps some letter of yours has been lost. Indeed, so it must be; for he says they have had no news of you for very long. I will read it." She began—

"SIGNORA,—I feel that, without doubt, you may look upon my presuming to write to you as a great impertinence, and that I have scarcely a right to do so; but the very great interest and solicitude I have always felt for your husband cause me to beg for your indulgence. It is now a long time since I have received any answer to my letters, and I have no news of him to tell to his mother, so that she is breaking her heart; and for her sake I have ventured to appeal to you, who are also a woman, and can understand better than a man what it is to feel herself forgotten

by a son for whom she has toiled, and laboured, and suffered so much. The last we heard of him was, that he had taken a wife, and that in you he had found perfect happiness. He also told us that he is not your equal in birth—that you are a lady; and it appears to me possible, in that case, that you may be ashamed of the poor old peasant mother, and wish to keep her son entirely away from her. Is this true? Ah! if God has given you also a little child, you will be better able to understand what her feelings must be; for she has been a very fond and loving mother, and for many years he was all in all to her. She grows old now, and is worn out with care and pining for him; and though you have both been very good, and sent her money constantly, she often says that could she see your husband once again, it would do her more good than all the comforts the money gives her. Can you not both come to San Jacopo? You shall be treated as becomes your position; I will see to that. Tell your husband that all his old friends and companions are well——”

“I had no friends, no companions,” broke in Giannetto, angrily. “The man is in his dotage!”

Elvira looked at him in astonishment before she resumed her reading.

“Tell him also that, should he come, they will all welcome him warmly. Several changes have taken place. Pietro’s wife is dead, the good Baldovinetta; and he has married again, old Masaniello’s youngest daughter, whom we used to call ‘*brutta e buona*,’ and she makes him an excellent wife. Tonino has been apprenticed to Andrea Castagno, and is a clever lad. Andrea kept on the new boat after his father’s death in the great storm, though he was but sixteen at the time; and, by the blessing of San Jacopo, he has succeeded very well. I have employed the last sum of money your husband sent in buying for Carola that large *vigna* behind the place where old Nicolo’s cottage stood, that was washed away; and she hires his son, Ceccho, to cultivate it, and keeps a mule of her own. It is her one happiness to think that all these riches came from her beloved son; but one moment’s sight of him in his own person would be the richest gift he could bestow upon her—and she wearies Madonna to grant her this blessing. Dear signora, forgive me if I take too great a liberty in thus addressing you; but I also am growing old and infirm, and Giannetto——”

Elvira paused. “Giannetto! Who is Giannetto?” she said. “It is I,” answered her husband, with ill-concealed impatience. “That was the foolish name I always went by. I dropped it, for I hate the very sound of it.”

“Foolish! oh no, I like the name—your mother’s pet name for you.” She returned to her letter—

“And Giannetto was as dear to me as any son could be to his father; so that, in addressing his wife, I feel as if I must know her already. If it be in your power, then, let Giannetto come back to his mother,—not to stay—I know well, and have explained to her, the different sphere of society to which he has attained. We would not for the world that he should give up his new pursuits, companions, or friends. Only this I ask—and further, I am bold enough to demand, as a Christian priest—that he should now and then remember that he is the only son of his mother, and she is a widow.”

The letter dropped from Elvira’s hand, and she turned her brown, wistful eyes on her husband. He did not speak.

“It is a touching letter, Nino. The poor mother must have suffered very much. Is it quite impossible that, when we leave Venice, we should go to San Jacopo? Only for a few days—for one day even?”

Giannetto leapt off the sofa, and paced up and down the room. “Elvira,” he said, his face full of keen distress, “listen to what I say. What you ask is an impossibility. I cannot, and I will not, return there. I cannot tell you why—it concerns myself alone; but, Elvira, trust me, it is a sufficient reason. There are some things in which a wife must trust her husband implicitly without striving to understand them, and this is one of them.”

“And the poor mother?” murmured Elvira.

Giannetto stamped on the ground in real anger. “Elvira, do not go on like this. You do not know what you are talking of. I will take care that that meddling priest does not come between you and me.”

“Stop, stop, Giannetto,” she cried, rising from the ground and clasping her hands; “do not say what you will repent of as soon as said. I will say no more, I promise you; but oh, Nino——”

“You will say no more; you have passed your word?”

“Nino! Nino!”

"It is a promise," he repeated, distinctly.

Giannetto took up the letter, tore it into a thousand pieces, and tossed them out of the window. Elvira covered her face with her hands, bitter tears forcing themselves through her clasped fingers.

Giannetto stood and looked at her wistfully. After a few moments she pushed back the masses of dark hair from her brow, and came up to his side, raising her sweet face to be kissed. He clasped her suddenly to him. "Elvira! Elvira! if I only could—if I only dared—" He stopped, the full consequences of what he might say flashing upon him. "But, Elvira, you will trust me; you at least, will always trust me?"

"With my whole heart, Nino," she answered. "God will direct you aright. I will have faith in you. You are cold, Nino; you shiver."

"No, no; it is nothing—only that pain again."

Both their hearts were heavy that night. Giannetto came home late from the opera. After all was over, he had rowed far out to sea, striving to regain calmness. He had been singing magnificently. Applause resounded through the theatre, and from every side bouquets fell upon the stage. The heat was intense, but the house was crowded. But as he came off the stage, he could not help observing that, even while congratulating him, his fellow-actors shrank from him, and whispered behind his back. He felt very sore and aggrieved. And there was this ever-present trouble, too, between himself and his wife. It was all very hard to bear. Weary and heart-sick, he threw himself on his bed, and sank into the heavy sleep of exhausted nature.

Elvira, after he left her for the theatre, stole quietly away to her child. She dismissed the nurse, and sat watching it far into the hot summer night.

CHAPTER VIII.

1 ABOUT four o'clock in the morning, the violent ringing of a bell echoed through the Palazzo Lucchetti, and Giannetto was aroused by a light gleaming in his face. Elvira, white and terrified, stood beside him. "Nino, Nino, get up! quick, quick! there is no time to lose! The child is ill. Oh, Nino! I fear she is dying!"

Giannetto sprang out of bed. "What is it, Elvira? What must I do?"

"Oh, fly, fly for a doctor! Call any one—only be quick! be quick! or she will die!"

Elvira hastened away swiftly as she had come. Giannetto dressed himself hurriedly, and followed her to the room where the child lay. Terrible was the shock that awaited him. The little one lay in Elvira's lap, passing from one convulsion into another. None could have recognized in that face, so distorted and changed, the sweet calm of little Felicità.

Elvira looked up, almost wild in her anxiety. "Not gone yet! Nino, Nino, every moment is an hour!—not yet! Manna, you go! quick! we may yet save her; you know of some doctor? Oh, go! go!"

Manna, who had been kneeling by the child, sprang to her feet and rushed from the room, leaving the father and mother alone.

Elvira did not speak, but now and then a little moan came from her lips.

Giannetto sat down, drawing his chair forward, and looking down on the child. "Elvira," he said hoarsely, "will she die? is she going to die?" Her sole answer was to raise her eyes to his with a look of agony. They sat watching—how long they knew not; it seemed a year, though in reality but a few minutes.

An old doctor was living in an upper apartment in the palazzo, and to him Manna and the landlady went. He came at once; and in five minutes the little one was placed in a warm bath, and for the time the danger was over. For hours they sat and watched. The little face regained its soft calm, the tossing limbs grew still, and she sank into a sweet calm sleep. They wrapped her in warm blankets and laid her on her bed. The doctor felt her pulse; it was even now, but for an occasional wild throb. He turned to Elvira and said, "She will do well now, if I mistake not; but give her the medicine I send you as often as you can."

He was going, but Elvira stopped him. "Pardon me," she said, "but tell me the real truth—will she die?"

The old doctor looked at her very compassionately. "Poor signora," he said, "you must not hope too much. I have never seen a more violent attack; and if it comes again—" He shrugged his shoulders.

Every trace of colour fled out of Elvira's face and lips, and she grasped Giannetto's arm to support herself.

"Why tell her this?" he exclaimed, passionately. "Why should you make it worse by telling her beforehand?"

The doctor looked rather displeased. "Some say 'tell,' some 'conceal.' I, for my part, speak the truth when I am asked; and you, sir, should have the complaisance to hear me finish what I have to say. If, by giving the proper medicines, and having a warm bath always ready, you can keep off the attacks, well; if not —"

He took off his spectacles, beginning to wipe them with his large blue handkerchief. Giannetto sat down again moodily. With a deep bow, which all were too much preoccupied to acknowledge, the doctor quitted the room.

They heard him speaking outside to a little group of servants and lodgers, drawn together by sympathy and curiosity, headed by the *padrona* or landlady. "It is a bad case, Signora Padrona — a bad case; and I fear me they will lose their child. The first child, you say? It is a pity; but it is the will of heaven. If the convulsions come on again, for the love of heaven, Signora Padrona, have a priest in the way with the holy unction; for they are frightfully violent, and the child is very weak. Was there no one to tell them to put it in hot water at once? What fools people are! and the women in especial! But it is too true. The mother is very young, and it is a first child. A thousand thanks, signora; no wine, but I would take a cup of coffee with cognac. A thousand thanks. With permission, I will wait here, and will snatch a moment's sleep — I cannot find it in my heart to go up-stairs. Ah! there is the coffee — none in Venice like yours, Signora Padrona. It is now striking the six hours. Well, well, I will take a little more repose." And the rough but kindly old doctor stretched himself on a couple of hard old-fashioned chairs.

The day came on, and grew into a fierce glare of heat, and still the little one slept. The blinds were drawn down, and kept constantly wetted by Manna with cold water; and a huge block of ice sent in by the landlady helped to keep the room comparatively cool.

All day Elvira sat at the foot of the bed, little simple books of devotion by her side, which now and then she took up. She could only read a few lines at a time, but they suggested thoughts on which she strove to fix her mind. When Manna brought her food, she ate it mechanically, for she knew that she must

not waste her strength. Giannetto was so restless that she persuaded him to go out when mid-day had passed.

The doctor came in constantly. Elvira believed that all was going on well; but he did not like the heavy sleep of the child, and often desired it to be roused, to swallow medicine.

Evening came again; the sun went down in a bath of liquid fire, and fierce rays of dark crimson streaked the sky, still purple with glowing heat.

Giannetto came softly in. "How is she? how is she doing now?" he whispered. "Just the same. Thank God for this long sweet sleep!"

Elvira moved slowly to the little bed. As she gazed, a look of horror came over her face — the convulsions had returned. "Nino! Manna! it has come again! — quick! fly!" Giannetto flew up-stairs for the doctor; Manna brought forward the bath. The doctor, as he came hastily down, called out, "Signora Padrona — signora, quick! send for him at once," and he followed Giannetto into the room.

The landlady knew only too well whom and what he meant. Down she went, on to the steps at the door, and hastily called to a gondolier.

She was just about to step off the stairs, when another gondola came gliding swiftly round the corner, under the canopy of which, with his hands folded in his habit, sat the stern, upright figure of a Franciscan monk.

"*Padre! padre!*" she shouted, at the utmost pitch of her shrill Italian voice. "*Padre!* for the love of God!"

The friar started from his apparent reverie. "Stop," he said to the gondolier. "I am wanted."

The landlady bent forward, — "Father," she repeated, "if you are a priest, come in — come in at once. A child is dying — the only child of Giovanni, the great singer."

The friar stepped out of his gondola, and followed the kind-hearted woman, as, breathless and almost sobbing, she hastened up the stairs. "It is the hand of God," he muttered to himself.

On they went, through the long suite of cool rooms, across the gallery at the end, into the sick-chamber.

One single glance was enough — they were too late.

The room was full of people. Elvira sat upon the floor with the child on her lap. Manna had lifted it out of the bath, and placed it there; and, all unheeded, the water was dripping from its soft

brown hair. As if turned to stone, the mother's eyes were fixed upon the tiny corpse. Manna's sobs rang through the room; the others, mere spectators of the scene, lodgers and servants in the house, stood close round, and now and then one of them spoke a gentle word of sympathy. Giannetto remained motionless, with his arms folded, as he had stood to watch his child die.

This was the scene that met their eyes as the door opened.

All made way involuntarily as Fra Gerónimo (for he it was) entered. All knelt when he approached—all but one, the unhappy father, who, as the first sacred words broke the silence, stole away, crouching, creeping, cringing, as the voice of prayer upraised itself to heaven. Outside the door he stood, alone, an outcast from God and man.

They removed Elvira from the room. Gently, tenderly they carried her away, and laid her on the green couch in the large empty room. She was not insensible, but she lay stunned and tearless, without moving, where they placed her. They threw the window wide open and let in the evening air; one little ray still lingered from the dying sunset, and checkered the polished floor. They sought for Giannetto, and sent him to her there. The friar was gone. He knew that this was not his time—that for his work patience was needed.

Giannetto stole in, and sat clasping his wife's hand, which lay in his quite cold and motionless.

Peck, peck, peck! what was that? and then that soft-sounding cooing? Motionless they watched. One by one, pluming their soft wings, billing and cooing to each other, the pigeons of St. Mark came gently in. They looked for the tiny hand that had fed them, for the little one that had loved them so well.

Peck, peck—there was no bread to-day. Was it only imaginary that the cooing voices took a wondering sound? They came closer, turning their pearly heads from side to side, passing in and out of the dying ray of light.

Elvira suddenly started forward and burst into a wild fit of hysterical weeping. With a loud whirl of terror, the pigeons flew away.

The storm of grief let loose seemed to shake her from head to foot; her self-command had given way, and she knew not what she said. Clinging, holding on to Giannetto, she poured out the agony of her grief; now imploring him to tell

her what the secret was that kept them apart, now telling him that she could and would trust him, but he must not look at her like that, not be angry with her; for her child was dead, and there was nothing left to her but him. Then she would call upon the child, calling her her comfort, her only hope for Nino's conversion. Fits of exhaustion followed, but the slightest word brought back the flood of agony.

So through the long, long night, till another morning dawned. Then Giannetto took his pale wife by the hand, and led her from the chamber. She let him do what he wished with her, following him whither he would.

Down the silent canals they passed, crossed the piazza of St. Mark, to the door of the great cathedral. "Go in," he murmured hoarsely; and she obeyed.

Compared to the outer air it was dark, but she saw at once what her eyes mechanically sought. Before the high altar stood a little bier, covered by a pall as white as driven snow; wreaths of lovely flowers lay round and upon it, not all white, but red, and purple, and gold, glowing with colours, typical of that glory to which the child had attained. Elvira sank upon her knees, and her heart rose up in fervent prayer.

In a far corner of the cathedral, where it was all dark and in shadow, knelt the Franciscan, pale from fasting, exhausted by the vigils of a long night, in which, in pain and penance, he had been wrestling for a fallen soul.

CHAPTER IX.

"I AM sure we shall be too early, John," said Amy to her husband. "Nonsense, Amy; we are not in London. Remember how early Roman hours are."

They were driving up to the door of a house in Rome one evening on which some English friends had a large party. It was a soft oppressive evening; the sirocco had been blowing all day, making the air heavy and languid. They drove rattling under the covered doorway, the heavy Roman carriage-horses stopping with a suddenness which threw Amy forward.

"How I hate that way of stopping!" she exclaimed, as she shook out her ruffled plumes, and followed the porter upstairs.

The room in which the lady of the house received her guests was pretty and peculiar. It had often been used for private theatricals, and possessed a recess

between the two tall French windows, filled by a raised orchestra or stage, now brilliant with flowers, and enlivened by a large cage full of little merry birds. The hostess, seeing that Amy was watching them, told her that they were a constant source of anxiety to her children; for, from time to time, three or four of the poor little prisoners disappeared, and such a disappearance was too often followed by a dish of so-called larks at dinner, causing most uncomfortable misgivings.

The room was full of guests, most of them English; but there was a sprinkling of German *attachés*, who looked bored, and twirled their yellow moustaches; and a few Italians, chiefly men. The English were of every description,—young eldest sons “doing” Rome; mammas giving fair, very young daughters, a first taste of society before bringing them out in London; most of the regular English residents in Rome; and here and there an Italian artist, very much out of his element.

There was a little music. The young lady of the house sang tolerably, and her music-master, a small dapper Italian, accompanied her in high glee; for she sang songs composed by himself, of the very weakest description. Ices were handed round at intervals, and tea, from which the Italians shrunk back involuntarily.

The mixture of social elements was too incongruous, conversation flagged, and Amy felt wearied. She pushed open the half-closed window, and went out to enjoy the cool of the little garden.

It was very pretty in its own way; and it amused her to watch a tame jackdaw hopping about on the wall, with its head very much on one side. There was a good deal to explore and discover, notwithstanding the diminutiveness of the place. On the right was a little grotto, curtained with maidenhair fern, in which a nymph in white marble, nearly the size of life, reposed, in utter disproportion to the dimensions of her shrine. There was a little grove also; as you wandered through its mazes you came upon busts, and statues, and fountains full of goldfish; many of the busts had lost their noses, but they were nevertheless suggestive, all of them being antique. Over one fountain the ivy and leaves grew very thickly, and half-hidden among them lay a little marble Cupid asleep. Amy, wandering about, was bending down to look at him more nearly, when a sound

from the drawing-room made her suddenly turn back and approach the window.

It was a sound of singing, so lovely that she would not interrupt or break the spell, but leant against the wall outside, in the midst of a great bush of scarlet salvias, which contrasted prettily with the soft white gown she wore.

She could just see enough to perceive that the little singing-master was accompanying; his mobile Italian face was screwed into an expression of ecstasy, as the glorious full notes of a wonderful tenor voice swelled through the room—now it rose to inconceivable power, now softened till the strain was almost heavenly in its sweetness. Amy was entranced; she stood motionless till the last sound died away. The silence was broken by a sudden burst of applause, and the gentlemen gathered round the singer.

Amy took advantage of the movement, and came in unobserved amid the general confusion. “Who is he? What is his name?” she asked her nearest neighbour.

“It is Giovanni, the great tenor; he has just come to Rome. Did you ever hear such a voice? is it not lovely, glorious?” And the old English lady whom she had addressed very quietly managed to wipe away a tear. There was a general hush; people fell back, many seated themselves, and Giovanni sang again.

Amy felt the sort of superstitious dread creep over her that her partial knowledge of his history gave. She could not take her eyes off his face, it seemed so altered, and yet so like what it had been when she first saw him.

The second song over, Giovanni moved away from the piano, while renewed murmurs of admiration filled the room.

The crowd made way, and the lady of the house bustled up to Amy. “Allow me to introduce Signora Giovanni,” she said, in French, adding in a low voice, as she hurried away,—“his wife, you know—she is anxious to be presented to you.”

Amy made room on the sofa beside her for the pale but still lovely Elvira, who, in her heavy black velvet gown, looked even more white and frail than usual.

“I must ask a thousand pardons, signora,” she began at once; “but your likeness to your sister struck me so for-

cibly, that I asked who you were, and could not resist taking the liberty of begging to be presented to you."

"I am very glad of it," said Amy; "I have heard so much of you that I have been long anxious to make your acquaintance, and to meet your husband again. I must indeed congratulate you. What a talent! What a singularly beautiful voice!"

"The signora is too good. Yes, she is right; it is a wonderful talent. I trust that the Signor Conte your father is in good health; and your sister, she is well?"

"They are both well; and it will give them great pleasure to hear that I have seen you. They have often spoken to me of you, and of Signor Giovanni, — and the baby, little Felicità, is she well?"

Elvira showed no more signs of emotion than the quivering of her voice, as she answered — "Thank you, dear signora; but when you write to them, will you tell them that she is dead?"

Amy looked and felt shocked at this answer to her question; but Elvira smiled very sweetly, and went on, — "Are your little children well? The Signora Elena used to tell me about them when we were at Florence. Are they with you? But no! Surely you have not brought them so long a journey?"

"No, indeed!" answered Amy; "they are too young. I thought it best to leave them at home. Helen has charge of them."

"Ah, what a happiness for her!"

"By the by, Signora Giovanni," said Amy suddenly, "do you ever see anything of a certain Fra Geronimo, a Franciscan, in whom my father was much interested? I think (but I am not sure) that you knew him, that he was your friend?"

"No, no," said Elvira — "not then; but it is curious that you should ask. We did not know him then. Without doubt, we mean the same person — the great preacher. We know him now; but it was accidentally, and under sad circumstances, that we first met him, about six months ago, at Venice. He is in Rome now, I understand; and this very Sunday that comes, he is to preach at Santa Maria del Popolo. If the signora has not heard him, she should go; for it is a wonderful power, and given to few. Do you remain long in Rome? Are you interested? amused?"

"Very much; it is a marvellous place. And you, have you been here long?"

"We have but now come. My husband has accepted a very short engagement till the beginning of Lent. We have been lately at Turin and at Milan. He does not like the music here, neither the pieces given, nor the musicians — they are all bad; there is no school, no method, he says, except in the papal choir, and that stands by itself, apart. They are ill-taught at the opera; but the voices are good — fine in tone and quality."

Giannetto approached his wife. "Elvira," he said, "I fear that we must take leave; for I have promised to sing elsewhere to-night." Elvira rose, and, with her pretty Italian curtsy, wished Amy good-night.

Scarcely were they gone when a perfect buzz of conversation arose, to which Amy listened, anxious to hear all she could about them. One of the gentlemen — an old *habitué* of Roman society — professed to know more than any one. He was talking rather mysteriously as Amy drew her chair into the little circle which had formed itself round him.

"Yes," he was saying, "there is something decidedly odd about the man and his pretty wife. A friend of mine told me that at Venice very strange things were said about him, and the extraordinary power and unchanging quality of his voice. For instance, once he came to the opera, half-fainting with fatigue — as white as a sheet, and trembling as if with palsy; but when he opened his mouth, his voice was as grand and clear as if he was in the fullest strength. My friend heard afterwards that he had lost his only child that very morning."

"But," said one of the bystanders, "a very powerful will will often carry one through on such occasions."

"True; but how would you account for this — that through heat and cold, draughts, crowds, all those accidents that most affect a singer's voice, his has never been known to vary? He is always singing, never gives himself any rest. No, no, my friends; it is very unaccountable, and not so easy to explain as you seem to think it."

Here the little singing-master broke in — "Ah, signori! is he not a wonder, a marvel? After one has heard him, one can listen to no more. Truly, it seems to me that his singing is a *finale* to the music of the evening."

"Do you know him? Are you acquainted with his history?"

"I know him, certainly; but I know nothing of his history. I have been at his house occasionally. He is good and charitable, and gives largely. I know of some very poor families in Venice to whom he has been very kind; and even to others who are apparently in better circumstances, but who, God knows, often need as much, he has been a true friend." His little twinkling eyes glistened as he spoke.

"And his wife, who is she?"

"I can tell you that," said Amy, gently. "She is the daughter of a very respectable government official at Florence; and my father both knew and respected the family much. There is nothing at all mysterious about her," she added, smiling.

When the party had broken up, and Amy was alone with her husband in the carriage, she told him how anxious she was not to lose sight of Giovanni and Elvira, for she felt the deepest interest in both, but especially in the sad-looking young wife. But days passed in the usual whirl of life in Rome, and they never chanced to meet.

The time passed in sight-seeing all day, going into society at night, and occasionally a visit to the opera. Giannetto was so great a man now that he could afford to be capricious; he sang rather irregularly—sometimes disappointing his audiences by refusing to do so.

The Carnival approached, and gaieties increased; balls and parties every night, the usual fun in the Corso, the throwing of *confetti*, of bouquets, bonbons, etc., from balconies and windows—all the customary noise and bustle, which Amy and her husband were still young enough to enter into and enjoy most thoroughly.

Then came the sudden change—the falling, as it were, of the black veil of Lent over the merry streets. No one who has not seen it can imagine the transformation of Rome, not only outer but inner Rome, at that season; for the streets, no longer crowded with singing, dancing revellers, are quiet and empty,—the same crowds that lately swarmed in them kneel in the churches, calm, collected, and devout; some hundreds of them have passed from the wildest excitement to the deepest prostration of spirit; all are alike sobered and absorbed by the religious duties of the season.

The weather changed, and became cold and bleak; a bitter *tramontana*

swept the streets; and most of the English left Rome for Naples, there to spend the weeks between the beginning of Lent and the Easter festivities.

Giannetto and Elvira remained in Rome. He spent most of his days wandering in the Campagna, often not coming home till late, for his restlessness kept him always moving. Her life sank into a gentle, regular monotony. Like most Italian women, Elvira had no resources in herself—she neither drew nor worked, she scarcely ever read; but, during this season, she passed almost all her time in church. There she seemed really happy; and her neighbours called her *dévoté*, a saint. Her confessor, Fra Geronimo, encouraged her. "Courage, daughter," he would say; "pray—fast and pray. Wrestle as I wrestle, and the soul of your husband will be given to us."

Under a stern sense of duty, Fra Geronimo had never revealed to Elvira what he knew of her husband's history, so of that she was ignorant still.

Giannetto seemed instinctively to know where and how she passed her time, for he never asked. More and more taciturn and sad he grew, till all the sweet smiles with which she greeted him failed to elicit one in return. She thought that the enforced idleness of Lent told on his spirits, and she made many efforts to rouse and cheer him, but too often in vain.

One day he came in looking brighter and more lively than he had done for a long time. He was flourishing a letter in his hand. "Elvira, what say you to this?" he cried; "the offer of an engagement in London—from Covent Garden! The offer is a magnificent one. Tell me, dear one, should you not like the change?—the novelty of it all? You would see your English friends. What do you say?" "England! London!—ah! shall we really go there?"

"Yes, really; I wait but your consent to accept. They are appreciative, these English—it will be a pleasure to sing to them. It will do you good, Elvira—the cool summer will bring the colour into my dear one's pale face."

The little pale face was now flushed with pleasure at the unwonted brightness of his tone, and she looked up eagerly. "Ah, Nino mine, it will do us both good! When do we go?"

"Immediately after Easter, when London is most full. More fame to be won yet, Elvira. I climb! I climb! and be-

fore long it shall be said that I am the greatest singer the world has ever seen!" His face flushed, his eyes sparkled, and he drank in the proud conviction that the crown of his ambition was coming, an unrivalled and world-wide fame.

"Ah! truly there is none to compare with my Nino," said his young wife, twining her arms around him; "and there is nothing like the gift of song."

That evening a small close carriage stopped before the "Fontana di Trevi." There is a well-known and cherished superstition, that if you drink of this water the night before leaving Rome it insures your return.

Out of the carriage stepped Amy and her husband, and descended the steps to the fountain-edge. The water sparkled and danced in the moonlight; and the shadows of the rock, Tritons, and great sea-horses were so disturbed that it seemed almost as if they were in truth plunging and tumbling in the clear streams which dashed over them.

Giannetto and Elvira passed slowly by on foot, enjoying a moonlight walk.

"See, Elvira, there are travellers going down to drink at the fountain to insure a return to Rome!"

Elvira let go his arm. "Look, look, Nino!" she said; "it is the English Signora Aimée and her husband." And she went down the steps.

"Once, twice, three times for good luck!" exclaimed Amy, drinking the clear, sweet water.

"It is all nonsense," grumbled her husband — but he drank nevertheless.

"Signora, Signora Aimée," said Elvira's soft voice; "so you leave Rome?"

Amy turned round eagerly. "I am so glad to have seen you once more. Yes, we go to-morrow."

"I am glad to be able to wish you a good journey." She held out her hand. Amy took it, and with a sudden impulse bent down and kissed her.

She went away to her carriage, and Elvira stood watching till they were out of sight.

Giannetto drew her hand under his arm. "How cold you are, child! come home at once." He stooped and drank a handful of the water. "It is refreshing," he said; "but do not let us delay — these Roman nights are treacherous."

From Blackwood's Magazine.

THE ABODE OF SNOW.

SCENES IN KASHMIR.

I HAD to break off rather abruptly last month in treating of Kashmir, and must now refer briefly to a few more picturesque places in that beautiful country. There is one excursion from Srinagar, which can easily be made in a day by boat, that is specially worthy of notice, and it takes through canals and through the apple-tree garden into the Dal-o City Lake, and to two of the gardens and summer-houses of the Mogul emperors. I write on the shore of Ulleswater, at once the grandest and most beautiful of the English lakes: the mountains and sky are reflected with perfect distinctness in the deep unruffled water, and the renewed power of the earth is running up through the trees, and breaking out into a dim mist of buds and tiny leaves; but exquisite as the scene before me is, its beauty cannot dim or equal my remembrance of the lakes of Kashmir, though even to these the English scenery is superior as regards the quality, to use a phrase of Wordsworth's, of being "graduated by nature into soothing harmony."

The Dal is connected with the Jhelam by the Sont-i-Kol or Apple-tree Canal, which presents one of the finest combinations of wood and water in the world. The scene is English in character; but I do not know of any river-scene in England which is equal to it — so calm is the water, so thickly is the stream covered with tame aquatic birds of very varied plumage, so abundant the fish, so magnificent, as well as beautiful, the trees which rise from its lotus-fringed, smooth, green banks. An Afghan conqueror of Kashmir proposed to cover this piece of water with a trellis-work of vines, supported from the trees on the one side to those on the other; but that would have shut out the view of the high, wild mountains which heighten, by their contrast, the beauty and peacefulness of the scene below. Many of the trees, and a whole line of them on one side, are enormous planes (*Platanus orientalis*), mountains of trees, and yet beautiful in shape and colour, with their vast masses of foliage reflected in the calm, clear water.

From thence we pass into the Dal, a lake about five miles long, with half the distance in breadth, one side being bounded by great trees, or fading into a reedy waste, and the other encircled by lofty mountains. The most curious feat-

ure of this lake is the floating gardens upon the surface of its transparent water. The reeds, sedges, water-lilies, and other aquatic plants which grow together in tangled confusion are, when they cluster together more thickly than usual, detached from their roots. The leaves of the plants are then spread out over the stems and covered with soil, on which melons and cucumbers are grown. These floating islands form a curious and picturesque feature in the landscape, and their economical uses are considerable. Moorcroft mentions having seen vines upon them, and has supplied the detailed information regarding them which has been made use of by succeeding travellers and statisticians. "A more economical method of raising cucumbers cannot be devised,"—and, he might have added, of melons also. According to Cowper,—

No sordid fare,

A cucumber !

But, thanks to these floating gardens, you don't require to ruin yourself in order to eat cucumbers in Kashmir; and the melons are as good as they are cheap, and must have valuable properties; for Captain Bates says, "Those who live entirely on them soon become fat," which probably arises from the sugar they contain. Usually, in the fruit season, two or three watchers remain all night in a boat attached to these islands, in order to protect them from water-thieves. On the Dal I came across several boatmen fishing up the root of the lotus with iron hooks attached to long poles. This yellow root is not unpalatable raw, but is usually eaten boiled, along with condiments. Southey's lines, though strictly applicable only to the red-flowering lotus, yet suggest a fair idea of the lotus-leaves on this Kashmir lake, as they are moved by the wind or the undulations of the water.

Around the lotus stem

It rippled, and the sacred flowers, that crown
The lakelet with their roseate beauty, ride
In gentlest waving, rock'd from side to side.
And as the wind upheaves
Their broad and buoyant weight, the glossy
leaves

Flap on the twinkling waters up and down.

Still more useful for the people of Kashmir, as an article of diet, is the horned water-nut (*Trapa bispinosa*), which is ground into flour, and made into bread. No less than sixty thousand tons of it are said to be taken from the Wular

Lake alone every season, or sufficient to supply about thirteen thousand people with food for the entire year. These nuts are to be distinguished from the nuts, or rather beans, of the lotus (*Nelumbium speciosum*), which are also used as an article of food, and prized as a delicacy. These, with the lotus-roots, and the immense quantity of fish, provide abundance of food for a much larger population than is to be found in the neighbourhood of the Kashmir lakes; but of what avail is such bounty of Providence and all the land lying round, when the first conditions of human prosperity are wanting?

Passing the Silver Island and the Island of Chúnárs, I went up to the Shalimar Bagh, or Garden of Delight, a garden and pleasure-house, the work of the emperor Jehángir and of his spouse Núr Jahán; but fine as this place is, I preferred the Nishat Bagh, or Garden of Pleasure, which is more in a recess of the lake, and also was a retreat constructed by the same royal pair, and planned by the empress herself. The Garden of Pleasure is more picturesquely situated, though shaded by not less magnificent trees. The mountains rise up close behind it, and suggest a safe retreat both from the dangers and the cares of state; and its view of the lake, including the Sona Lank, or Golden Island, is more suggestive of seclusion and quiet enjoyment. Ten terraces, bounded by magnificent trees, and with a stream of water falling over them, lead up to the latticed pavilion at the end of this garden. Between the double storeys of this pavilion the stream flows through a marble, or, at least, a limestone tank, and the structure is shaded by great *chunar* trees, while, through a vista of their splendid foliage, we look down the terraces and watercourses upon the lake below. This was, and still is, a fitting place in which a great, luxurious, pleasure-loving emperor might find repose, and gather strength for the more serious duties of power. Jehángir was a strange but intelligible character. One historian briefly says of him—"Himself a drunkard during his whole life, he punished all who used wine." And after the unsuccessful rebellion of his son Khusrú, he made that prince pass along a line of seven hundred of his friends who had assisted him in rebelling. These friends were all seated upon spikes—in fact, they were impaled; so we may see it was not without good reason that Jehángir occa-

sionally sought for secluded places of retirement. But these characteristics, taken alone, give an unfair idea of this great ruler. Though he never entirely shook off the dipsomaniac habits which he had formed at an early age, yet it may have been an acute sense of the inconvenience of them which made him so anxious to prevent any of his subjects from falling into the snare; he hints an opinion that though his own head might stand liquor without much damage, it by no means followed that other people's heads could do so; and the severe punishment of the adherents of a rebellious son was, in his time, almost necessary to secure the throne. He did, in fact, love mercy as well as do justice, and was far from being a bad ruler. He was wont to say that he would rather lose all the rest of his empire than Kashmir;* and it is likely that in this and similar gardens he enjoyed the most pleasure which his life afforded. His companion there was Mihrunnisá Khanam, better known as Núr Jahán, "the Light of the World."† When a young prince he had seen and loved her, but they were separated by circumstances; and it was not until after the death of her husband, Sher Afkan, and he had overcome her dread of marrying one whom she supposed to have been her husband's murderer, that Mihrunnisá became Jehángír's wife, and received the name of the Light of the World. A great improvement in the emperor's government resulted from this union: the story is a curious illustration of the abiding power of love, and it goes far to redeem the character of this dissipated emperor, who would allow nobody to get drunk except himself. I daresay, if the truth were known, the Light of the World must have had a sad time of it with her amorous lord; but she was at least devoted to him, and seriously risked her life for him when the audacious Mahabat Khan unexpectedly made him a prisoner. The memory of these faithful lovers seems still to linger about the Nishat Bagh, and to have transferred itself into the imperial splendour of the plane-trees, the grateful shadow of the mountains, and the soft dreamy vista over the placid lake.

Nearly all the English visitors had left Kashmir before I reached that country, and this gave me more opportunity of enjoying the society of Mr. Le Poer Wynne, of whom I may speak more freely than of other Indian officials who remain. Two or three officers, on their way out of the valley, appeared at the residency, and a couple of young Englishmen, or Colonials, fresh from the antipodes, who could see little to admire in Kashmir; but the only resident society in Srinagar was a fine Frenchman, a shawl-agent, and Colonel Gardiner, who commanded the maharajah's artillery, a soldier of fortune ninety years of age. Colonel Gardiner was born on the shores of Lake Superior, and had wandered into Central Asia at an early period. There was something almost appalling to hear this ancient warrior discourse of what have now become almost prehistoric times, and relate his experiences in the service of Ranjít Singh, Shah Shúja, Dost Mohammed, and other kings and chiefs less known to fame. If (as I have no reason to believe) he occasionally confused hearsay with his own experience, it could scarcely be wondered at considering his years, and there is no doubt as to the general facts of his career. Listening to his graphic narrations, Central Asia vividly appeared as it was more than half a century ago, when Englishmen could traverse it not only with tolerable safety, but usually as honoured guests.

But most usually the resident and myself spent our evenings *lête-à-lête*, no one coming in except an old Afghan *chuprasie*, whose business it was to place logs upon the fire. This Abdiel had been a sepoy, and was the only man in his regiment who had remained faithful at the time of the Mutiny—"among the faithless, faithful only he;" and the honesty of his character extended down into his smallest transactions. He took a paternal but respectful interest in us, clearly seeing that the fire must be kept up, though our conversation ought not to be disturbed; so he would steal into the room as quietly as possible, and place logs on the fire as gently as if we were dying warriors or Mogul emperors. Wynne himself was a man of very interesting mind and character, being at once gentle and firm, kindly and open, yet with much tact, and combining depth of thought with very wide culture. When a student he had employed his long vacations in attending universities of Germany and France, and was widely acquainted

* *Voyages de François Bernier, contenant la Description des Etats du Grand Mogol.* Amsterdam, 1699.

† She was also, for a time, called Nur Mahall, the Light of the Palace; and under this name must be distinguished from the queen of Jehángír's son, Shah Jahán, to whom was raised the wonderful Taj Mahál at Agra.

with the literature of these countries, as well as able to converse fluently in their languages. To the usual Oriental studies of an Indian civilian, he had added a large acquaintance with Persian poetry, and really loved the country to which he had devoted himself chiefly from a desire to find a more satisfactory and useful career than is now open to young men at home with little or no fortune. Perhaps he was too much of a student, disposed to place too high a value on purely moral and intellectual influences, and too much given to expect that young officers should renounce all the follies of youth, and old fighting colonels conduct themselves as if they were children of light. That sprang, however, from perfect genuineness and beauty of character, to which all things evil, or even questionable, were naturally repulsive; and it was wholly unaccompanied by any tendency to condemn others, being simply a desire to encourage them towards good. There was not a little of the pure and chivalrous nature of Sir Philip Sidney in Le Poer Wynne; and he might also be compared in character to the late Frederick Robertson of Brighton, whose sermons he spoke to me of as having made quite an era in his life. European culture and thought had not taught him to undervalue either the methods or the results of "divine philosophy," nor had his mind been overwhelmed by the modern revelations of the physical universe, though he was well acquainted with them; and his departure from much of traditional theology had only led him to value more the abiding truths of religion. Our conversation related only in part to the East, and ranged over many fields of politics, philosophy, and literature. I cannot recall these nights at Srinagar without mingled sadness and pleasure. It never struck me then that we were in a house at all; but rather as if we were by a camp-fire. My host had a way of reclining before the fire on the floor; the flames of the wood shot up brilliantly; brown Abdiel in his sheepskin coat suggested the Indian Caucasus; and instead of the gaudily painted wood-work of the residency, I felt around us only the circle of snowy mountains, and above, the shining hosts of heaven. And to both of us this was a camp-fire, and an unexpected happy meeting in the wilderness of life. A few months afterwards, Mr. Wynne, after a short run to Europe on privilege leave, returned to Calcutta, in order to take up the office of Foreign Secretary

during the absence of Mr. Aitchison, and died almost immediately after. He had not been many years in the Indian Civil Service, and the highest hopes were entertained of his future career. I had felt, however, instinctively, that so fine an organization, both mental and physical, must either "die or be degraded;" and perhaps it was with some subtle, barely conscious precognition of his early doom that Wynne rose and made a note of the lines which I quoted to him one night when we were speaking of the early death of another young Indian civilian —

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise.

But praise, or fame, as here used by Milton and some of our older writers, is not to be confounded with the notoriety of the world, which almost any eccentricity, vulgarity, self-assertion, or accidental success may command. It is even something more than the "good and honest report" of the multitude, or the approval of the better-minded of the human race, both of which judgments must often proceed on very imperfect and misleading grounds. Milton himself expressed the truest meaning of fame when Phœbus touched his trembling ears, and, immediately after the passage just quoted, he went on to say —

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistening foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies,
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed.

It may be fancied that the poet is rather inconsistent here, because he begins by speaking of fame as "the last infirmity of noble minds;" and surely it can hardly be an infirmity to value the judgment which proceeds from the "perfect witness of all-judging Jove." But there is no inconsistency when the whole passage in "Lycidas" is considered, beginning, "Alas! what boots it with incessant care —". The argument is that it must matter nothing, seeing that when we expect to find the guerdon and break out into sudden blaze, then comes Fate with the abhorred shears; but to this Phœbus answers reprovingly that fame is not of mortal growth, and only lives and spreads above. This suggests a double life even now, and identifies fame with

our own better existence. There is no subject, however, on which men are so apt to deceive themselves as when appealing to a higher and unseen judgment: probably few criminals go to execution without a deceiving belief that Heaven will be more merciful to them than man has been, because they can shelter themselves under the truth that Heaven alone knows what their difficulties and temptations have been, forgetting that it alone also knows their opportunities and the full wickedness of their life. Every man should mistrust himself when he looks forward to that higher fame with any other feeling than one of having been an unprofitable servant; and even this feeling should be mistrusted when it goes into words rather than to the springs of action. It is in the general idea, and as regards others rather than ourselves, that the consolation of Milton's noble lines may be found. The dread severance of the abhorred shears extends not merely to the lives of the young and promising, but to all in human life which is beautiful and good. What avails the closest companionship, the fondest love, before the presence of Death the separator? In even an ordinary life how many bright promises have been destroyed, how many dearest ties severed, and how many dark regrets remain! For that there is no consolation worth speaking of except the faith that all which was good and beautiful here below still lives and blooms above.

There are several very beautiful or striking places about the sources of the Jhelam which no visitor to Kashmir should omit to see. Islamabad can be reached in two days by boat, if the river is not in flood; and the mat awning of the boats lets down close to the gunwale, so as to form a comfortable closed apartment for night. In late autumn at least, the waters of Kashmir are so warm, as compared with the evening and night air, that towards afternoon an extraordinary amount of steam begins to rise from them. But the air is exceedingly dry notwithstanding the immense amount of water in the valley, and the frequent showers of rain which fall; and there is very little wind in Kashmir, which is an immense comfort, especially for dwellers in tents. There is now no difficulty in obtaining information in regard to Kashmir amply sufficient to guide the visitor. The older books on that country are well enough known, such as those of Bernier, Jacquemont, Moorcroft, Hügel, and

Vigne; and it is curious how much information we owe to them, and how repeatedly that information has been produced by later writers, apparently without any attempt to verify it, or to correct it up to date. Three books on Kashmir, however, which have been published very recently, will be found of great use to the traveller of our day. First and foremost of these is "A Vocabulary of the Kashmiri Language," by the late lamented medical missionary, Dr. W. J. Elmslie, published by the Church Missionary House in London in 1872. It is a small volume, and gives the Kashmiri for a great number of English words, as well as the English for Kashmiri ones; and he has managed to compress into it a large amount of valuable and accurate information in regard to the valley, its products and its inhabitants. To any one who has a talent for languages, or who has had a good deal of experience in acquiring them, it will be found a very easy matter to learn to speak a little modern Kashmiri, which is nearly altogether a colloquial language; and for this purpose Dr. Elmslie's vocabularies — the fruit of six laborious seasons spent in the country — will be found invaluable. The acquisition of this language is also rendered easy by its relationship to those of India and Persia. The largest number of its words, or about forty per cent., are said to be Persian; Sanscrit gives twenty-five; Hindústhani, fifteen; Arabic, ten; and the Turanian dialects of Central Asia, fifteen. The letters of ancient Kashmiri closely resemble those of Sanscrit, and are read only by a very few of the Hindú priests in Kashmir; and it is from these that the Tibetan characters appear to have been taken. The second important work to which I allude has not been published at all, having been prepared "for political and military reference" for the use of the government of India. It is "A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the adjacent districts of Kishtwár, Badrawár, Jamú, Naoshera, Púñch, and the Valley of the Kishen Ganga, by Captain Ellison Bates, Bengal Staff Corps." This volume was printed in 1873, and will be found very useful to those who can get hold of it. The principal places in the valley, and in the districts mentioned above, are enumerated alphabetically and described; and there are nearly one hundred and fifty pages in which routes are detailed in such a manner that the traveller will know what he has to expect upon them. It has also an intro-

duction which contains much information in regard to the country generally, but a great deal of this has been taken from the older writers, and some of it does not appear to have been verified. In this respect Dr. Elmslie's "Kashmiri Vocabulary" affords more original information than Captain Bates's "Gazetteer," but the latter will be found a very valuable work of reference. The third volume I speak of is of a less learned description, and is "The Kashmir Handbook: a Guide for Visitors, with Map and Routes. By John Ince, M.D., Bengal Medical Service;" and was published at Calcutta in 1872. This work is not free from errors, as notably in its rendering of the Persian inscriptions on the Takht-i-Súliman, and it indiscriminately heaps together a good deal of information from various sources: it is also very costly for its size; and the arrangement is not very good; but, nevertheless, it is a useful guide-book. Armed with these three recently published volumes, the visitor to Kashmir is supplied with all the information which an ordinary traveller requires in going through a strange country; but their maps are not satisfactory, and he will do well to supply himself with the five-mile-to-the-inch sheets of the "Trigonometrical Survey." The antiquarian may consult Cunningham's "Ancient Geography of India," published in London in 1871, and Lieutenant Cole's "Illustrations of Ancient Buildings in Kashmir." For the sportsman there are "Brinkman's Rifle in Kashmir," and several other books, more or less of a light character. Bernier, the first of all the European travellers in Kashmir since possibly Marco Polo, is exceedingly good; Jacquemont's Letters are graphic and amusing, though full of insane vanity; and Moorcroft gathered himself much more information regarding the country than almost any other traveller has done, for Elmslie may almost be regarded as having been a resident.

At Pándrathan, not far up the Jhelam from Srinagar, we came upon the site of an ancient capital of the Kashmir valley, and on a very ruinous old temple situated in the middle of a tank, or rather pond. The name of this place affords an excellent example of the present state of our knowledge of Kashmir antiquities; Dr. Ince, Captain Bates, and Lieut. Cole, following General Cunningham, deriving it from *Puranadhiṣṭhana*, or "the old chief city"—while Dr. Elmslie, adopting its Kashmir sound *Pandrenton*, derives it

from Darendun and his five sons the famous Pandus. Hügel, again, made the mistake of calling it a Bádhist temple, though it is clearly Hindú, and associated with the Naga or snake-worship. The water round this temple makes an examination of the interior difficult; but Captain Bates says that the roof is covered with sculpture of such purely classic design, that any uninitiated person who saw it on paper would at once take it for a sketch from a Greek or Roman original. This suggests actual Greek influence; and Cunningham says, in connection with the fluted columns, porches, and pediments of Mártand,—“I feel convinced myself that several of the Kashmirian forms, and many of the details, were borrowed from the temples of the Kabulian Greeks, while the arrangements of the interior and the relative proportions of the different parts were of Hindú origin.” It is not improbable, however, that these Kashmir ruins may have belonged to an earlier age, and have had an influence upon Greek architecture instead of having been influenced by it; but, be that as it may, this beautiful little temple, with its profusion of decoration, and grey with antiquity, stands alone, a curious remnant of a lost city and a bygone age—the city, according to tradition, having been burned by King Abhimanu in the tenth century of the Christian era.

Camping for the night some way above this, and on the opposite side of the river, I saw some magnificent hunting-dogs of the maharajah, which bounded on their chains, and could hardly be held by their keepers on the appearance of an unaccustomed figure. They were longer and higher than Tibetan mastiffs, and had some resemblance in hair and shape to Newfoundlands, but were mostly of a brown and yellow colour. The men in charge said these dogs were used for hunting down large game, especially leopards and wolves, and they were certainly formidable creatures; but the ordinary dogs of Kashmir are very poor animals, even excluding the pariahs. Bates says that the wild dog exists in some parts of this country, as Lár and Maru Wardwan, hunts in packs, and, when pressed by hunger, will destroy children, and even grown persons.

At Bijbehara, immediately above which the Jhelam begins to narrow considerably, there is one of those numerous and exquisitely picturesque-looking Kashmir bridges, resting on large square supports formed of logs of wood laid transversely,

with trees growing out of them and overshadowing the bridge itself. This town has four hundred houses; and the following analysis, given by Captain Bates, of the inhabitants of these houses, affords a very fair idea of the occupations of a Kashmir town or large village: Mohammedan zemindars or proprietors, eighty houses; Mohammedan shopkeepers, sixty-five; Hindú shopkeepers, fifteen; Brahmins, eight; pundits, twenty; goldsmiths, ten; bakers, five; washermen, five; cloth-weavers, nine; blacksmiths, five; carpenters, four; toy-makers, one; surgeons (query, phlebotomists), two; physicians, three; leather-workers, five; milk-sellers, seven; cow-keepers, two; fishermen ten; fish-sellers seven; butchers eight; musicians, two; carpet-makers, two; blanket-makers, three; Syud (descendant of the prophet), one; *múllas* (Mohammedan clergymen), twelve; *pir zadas* (saints !), forty; fakirs, twenty. It will thus be seen that about a fourth of the four hundred houses are occupied by the so-called ministers of religion; and that the landed gentry are almost all Mohammedan, though the people of that religion complain of their diminished position under the present Hindú (Sikh) Raj in Kashmir. For these four hundred houses there are ten mosques, beside eight smaller shrines and several Hindú temples, yet the Kashmiris are far from being a religious people as compared with the races of India generally. Let us consider how an English village of four thousand or six thousand people would flourish if it were burdened in this way by a fourth of its population being ministers of religion, and in great part ruffians without family ties.

It is a very rough and uncertain calculation which sets down the population of Kashmir at half a million. The whole population of the dominions of the maharajah is said to be a million and a half, but that includes Jamú, which is much more populous than Kashmir. Captain Bates says that the estimate of the maharajah's government, founded on a partial census taken in 1869, gave only 475,000; but that is better than the population of the year 1835, when oppression, pestilence, and famine had reduced it so low as two hundred thousand. It is, however, not for want of producing that the population is small; for, according to the same authority, "it is said that every woman has, at an average, ten to fourteen children." I do not quite understand this kind of average; but it

seems to mean that on an average, every woman has twelve children. That shows a prodigious fecundity, and is the more remarkable when we learn that the proportion of men to women is as three to one. This disproportion is produced by the infamous export of young girls to which I have already alluded; and it is impossible that such a traffic could be carried on without the connivance of the government, or, at least, of a very large number of the government officials. Dr. Elmslie's estimate of the population of Kashmir, including the surrounding countries and the inhabitants of the mountains, was 402,700—of these seventy-five thousand being Hindús, 312,700 being Súfí Mohammedans, and fifteen thousand Shias. His estimate of the population of Srinagar was 127,000; but the census of the government in 1869, gave 135,000 for that city.

At night our boatmen used to catch fish by holding a light over the water in shallow places and transfixing the fish with short spears. So plentiful are these creatures, that between two and three dozen were caught in about half an hour, and many of them above a pound weight. I cannot say much of them, however, as articles of diet. The flesh was insipid and soft as putty, and they were as full of bones as a serpent. Vigne acutely observed that the common Himáliyan trout varies so much in colour and appearance, according to its age, season, and feeding-ground, that the Kashmiris have no difficulty in making out that there are several species of it instead of one. Bates mentions eleven kinds of fish as existent in the waters of Kashmir; but, with one exception, all the fish I had the fortune to see seemed of one species, and were the same in appearance as those which abound in prodigious quantities in the sacred tanks and the ponds in the gardens of the Mogul emperors. The exception was a large fish, of which my servants partook on our way to the Wúlar Lake, and which made them violently sick. Elmslie agrees with Vigne in mentioning only six varieties, and says that the Hindús of Kashmir, as well as the Mohammedans, eat fish. Fly-fishing is pursued by the visitors to this country, but the fish do not rise readily to the fly, and Vigne says he found that kind of fishing to be an unprofitable employment. Much, however, depends on the streams selected for this purpose, and an Angler's Guide to Kashmir is still a desideratum. Dr. Ince

mentions several places where good casts are to be had, but otherwise he affords Piscator no information.

Islamabad is a fine name, and the town which it denotes is the terminus of the navigation of the upper Jhelam. Boats do not go quite up to it, but within two or three miles of it, and there are a number of highly interesting places round it within a radius of thirty miles. Though the second town in the province, it has only about fifteen hundred houses, and its population is a little doubtful, as the statistician leaves us at liberty to calculate from ten to thirty inhabitants to the house. It lies beneath the apex of the table-land, about four hundred feet higher, on which the ruins of Mártand are situated. By the Hindús it is called Anat Nag; and it is of importance to notice the number of Nags there are in Kashmir in general, and in this part of the country in particular, as the name relates to the old serpent-worship of the country. The present town of Islamabad is a miserable place, though it supports no less than fifteen Mohammedan temples, and its productions are shawls, saddle-cloths, and rugs. At the Anat Nag, where the sacred tanks are alive with thousands of tame fish, there are fine plane-trees and a large double-storeyed building for respectable travellers. I only stopped for breakfast; but a very short experience of the interior of that building drove me out into a summer-house in the garden. There is no doubt that if the fleas in the larger edifice were at all unanimous, they could easily push the traveller out of bed. The water of the sacred tanks proceeds from springs, and is slightly sulphureous in character, which does not appear to affect the health of the fish; but it is strictly forbidden to kill these fish.

At Islamabad, when I visited it, a good many newly-plucked crocus-flowers were in course of being dried in order to make saffron, though the great beds of this plant are farther down the Jhelam. I entirely agree with the emperor Jehángir—the man who would let nobody get drunk except himself—when he says, in his journal, of these crocus-flowers, “Their appearance is best at a distance, and when plucked they emit a strong smell.” With some humour Jehángir goes on to say—“My attendants were all seized with a headache; and although I myself was intoxicated with liquor at the time, I also felt my head affected.” One would like to know how

the Light of the World was affected on this occasion, but history is silent; and so far as I know, only Tmolus loved to adorn his head with crocus-flowers, as we learn from the first Georgic of Virgil, 56—

Nonne vides croceos ut Tmolus odores,
India mittet ebur, molles sua thura Sabæi.

Notwithstanding their odious smell when fresh, these saffron-flowers, when dried, are much valued as condiment for food, as medicine, and as supplying one of the colours with which Hindús make some of their caste-marks. The saffron is called *kóng* in the Kashmiri language; and, according to Elmslie, 180 grains of saffron—the dried stigmata of the *Crocus sativus*—bring nearly a shilling in the valley itself. In good seasons about two thousand *traks* of it are annually produced in the valley, and a *trak* seems to be equal to nearly ten pounds English. October is the season for collecting the flowers. A dry soil is said to be necessary to the growth of them; and in from eight to twelve years they exhaust the soil so much, that eight years are often allowed to elapse before growing it again on the exhausted ground.

The garden at Islamabad was full of soldiers, priests, and beggars; and I was glad to move on five miles to Bawan, on the Liddar, where there is a similar grove and fish-ponds, but far more secluded and with more magnificent trees. This is a delightful place, and almost no one was to be found in the enclosure round the tanks, which are held specially sacred. On the way thither I passed large flocks of ponies on graze, this part of Kashmir being famous for its breed. They are not in any respect, except size, to be compared with the ponies of Tibet; but they are tolerably sure-footed, and can continue pretty long daily journeys. At Srinagar I had purchased, for my own use, a Khiva horse, from a Panjabi colonel and well-known sportsman. It had been brought down to India in the year 1872 by the envoy whom the Khan of Khiva sent to Lord Northbrook to ask for assistance against the Russians—a request which was politely but firmly declined. This animal was of an iron-grey colour, with immensely thick, soft, short hair, and was of extraordinary thickness and length in the body, and so shaped that a crupper was required to keep the saddle from slipping on its shoulders. Nothing startled it; it was perfectly sure-footed, and could go long

journeys among the mountains; but, though it had been shod, its feet soon got sore when I rode it with any rapidity along the plains. Its favourite pace was an artificially produced one, which consisted chiefly in moving the two feet on one side simultaneously, and in that way, which was rather an easy pace, it went almost as fast as it could trot or canter.

The caves of Bhúmjú, in a limestone cliff near to Bawan, do not present very much of interest. One of them penetrates indefinitely into the mountain, and the belief is that it goes on for twenty miles at least; but it gets so narrow and low, that I was fain to come to a stop after going about two hundred paces with lighted torches. Dr. Ince, in his Kashmir hand-book, calls it the "Long Cave," and says that it "may be traversed for about 210 feet; beyond this the passage becomes too small to admit a man, even when crawling, so that its total length cannot be ascertained; the natives, however, believe it to be interminable. It is the abode of numerous bats, and the rock in many places is beautifully honey-combed by the action of water, which is constantly trickling from the higher portions of the roof." The water does trickle down upon one beautifully, but the honeycombing of the rock is the deposits of lime made by the water; and even within the two hundred feet a sense of pressure is experienced from the rock-walls. Of course I was told all sorts of stories as to what lies beyond, such as great galleries, halls, sculptures, inscriptions, rivers, waterfalls, evil demons, gods, goddesses, and so forth. All this sounded very interesting and enticing: but worming along a small aperture is by no means suited to my constitution or tastes, so I resisted the temptation, and said to myself, "Let General Cunningham creep up it: he is paid for looking after the archæology of India." About fifty feet from the entrance of this passage, and opening from the left of it, there is a small cave-temple. In a still smaller excavated room, nearer the entrance, there are the bones of a human being; but skeletons are not scarce in Kashmir, and no particular antiquarian interest attaches to these remains. Another cave in the immediate neighbourhood, which is reached by ladders and very steep stone steps, shows more traces of human workmanship. This is called the "Temple Cave." At its entrance there is a fine trefoil arch, and on one of the platforms inside there is what Ince

speaks of as "a Hindú temple built of stone, of pyramidal shape, about 11 1-4 feet square, and one of the most perfect specimens of this style of architecture to be seen in any part of the country." I examined this cave rather hurriedly, and took no notes concerning it, so I cannot speak with absolute certainty; but my recollection of this Hindú temple and perfect specimen of architecture is, that it was a somewhat ordinary but large *lingam*, an emblem which need not be explained to polite readers.

On the sides of the bridle-path from these caves to the table-land above, successive lake-beaches were distinctly visible. Geology leaves no doubt as to the truth of the old tradition that the great valley of Kashmir was once a magnificent lake, which has now subsided, leaving only remnants of itself here and there. The name of this ancient lake was Sahtsár, and the mountains surrounding it were thickly peopled. The tradition goes on to say that the lake became the abode of a terrible monster called Yaldeo, who, after devouring all the fish there were in the great water, proceeded to appease his hunger by devouring the inhabitants of the surrounding hills, who, in consequence, had to fly into the higher mountains above. At this stage the traditional *rishi*, or holy man, makes his appearance on the field: his name was Kashaf, and his great sanctity had given him the power of working miracles. This holy man proceeded to the north-west end of the lake, where the Jhelam now issues from the valley at Baramúla, struck the ground with his trident, and the opening earth caused the waters of the lake to disappear, which soon brought about the death of the monster Yaldeo. Hence the name Kashmir, which is made out to be a contraction of Kashafmar, the place or country of Kashaf, the *rishi*, who may thus be said to have made it. As to the truth or probability of this story about Kashaf, I need say nothing. The Hindú may turn round upon us and argue: "You say the age of miracles is over, and you can show no modern ones in support of your religion more probable or less puerile in appearance than those which the masses of this country believe that our devotees still accomplish. As the age of miracles is past for you, so, unhappily, is for us the age for the incarnation and appearance on earth of our gods, otherwise you would not be here. This we have long been taught, and see abundant

reason to believe, is the *Kala Yogi*, or Black Age, when the gods have retired from the earth; but that does not prove they have never been here before. We find that even the rationalistic Socrates did not deny the actual existence of the gods of Greece; and that in an age of culture and criticism, the historian Plutarch thoroughly believed in them. Is the universal belief of whole nations and of hundreds of millions of people for tens of centuries, to go for nothing in elucidation and proof of the past history of the human race? If so, what importance, what value, can we attach to the reasoning and conclusions of a few Western scientific men and critical historians who have formed a school within the last century? The probability would be that they, too, have fallen into delusion, and are blindly leading the blind. It is more rational to believe that the gods of ancient Greece and India really existed, as at the time they were universally believed to exist, and that they have now, alas! passed away from this portion of the universe, or have ceased to display themselves to the degraded human race."

Some way up on the table-land, in a now lonely and desolate position, which commands the great valley of Kashmir, I found the wonderful ruin of the great temple of Mártand. Vigne was quite justified in saying that, "as an isolated ruin, this deserves, on account of its solitary and massive grandeur, to be ranked, not only as the first ruin of the kind in Kashmir, but as one of the noblest amongst the architectural relics of antiquity that are to be seen in any country." According to tradition, a large city once stood round it—and there are indications that such may have been the case; but now this wonderful ruin stands alone in solitary unrelieved glory. It is strange, in this secluded Eastern country, where the works of man are generally so mean, and surrounded by these lofty snowy mountains, to come upon a ruin which, though so different in character, might yet vie with the finest remains of Greek and Roman architecture, in its noble dimensions, in its striking and beautiful form, in the gigantic stones of which it is composed, in its imposing position, and by the manner in which gloom and grandeur are softened by its exquisite pillars, and its delicate though now half-defaced ornamentation.

This temple is situated within an oblong colonnade, composed of fluted pil-

lars and decaying trefoil arches and walls. It rises above these in such perfect majesty that one can hardly believe its present height is only about forty feet. Its majestic outlines are combined with rich and elaborate details; but a description of these, or even of its outlines, would give no idea of its grand general effect, while desolation and silence are around. Moreover, as Captain Bates remarks, "It overlooks the finest view in Kashmir, and perhaps in the known world. Beneath it lies the paradise of the East, with its sacred streams and glens, its brown orchards and green fields, surrounded on all sides by vast snowy mountains, whose lofty peaks seem to smile upon the beautiful valley below."

Baron Hügel asserts of this ancient ruin, which he calls by its name of Korau Pandau, or, more usually, Pandu-Koru, that it "owes its existence and name to the most ancient dynasty of Kashmir. The great antiquity of the ruin will be acknowledged, therefore, when I remind the reader that the Pandu dynasty ended two thousand five hundred years before Christ, after governing Kashmir, according to their historians, nearly one thousand three hundred years." That would give an antiquity of nearly five thousand years to this temple: later archæologists, however, are more moderate in their demands upon our belief, and set it down as erected between A.D. 370 and 500; but the reasons for this are by no means conclusive. When one knows nothing about the history of an ancient temple, it is always safe to call it a temple of the sun; but in this case there is some support for the supposition in the Sanscrit meaning of the word Mártand. That, however, does not throw any light upon its age; and we may as well ascribe it to the Pandu dynasty as to any other period of ancient history. Kashmir may have been the mountain-retreat where Pandu himself died before his five sons began to enact the scenes of the "Mahabharata;" but modern Indian archæologists have got into a way of constructing serious history out of very slight and dubious references. This is not to be wondered at, because the first synthetical inquiries, as conducted by Lassen in particular, yielded such magnificent historical results, that later antiquaries have been under a natural temptation to raise startling edifices out of much more slender and dubious material. Hügel's date is quite as good as that of

A.D. 370; and where all is pretty much speculation, we are not called upon to decide.

But sufficient is dimly seen in the mists of antiquity to reveal something of the past, as we stand by this ancient temple and gaze over the Valley of Roses. A temple such as Mártand, and the city which once stood in its neighbourhood, would not, in all probability, have found a place on this plateau, except at a period when the valley was a great lake. Hence we may presume that this temple and city of the Pandus belonged to a very ancient period when the inhabitants of Kashmir were located on the slopes of the mountains round a great beautiful lake, more picturesquely surrounded than any sheet of water now existing upon the earth. The people were Indo-Aryans, retaining much of the simplicity and rich, powerful naturalness of the Vedic period, but civilized in a very high degree, and able to erect splendid temples to the sun-god. Associated with their Aryan religion they indulged in the serpent-worship which they had adopted from more primitive races, and perhaps from the rude Turanians of the neighbouring abodes of snow. In these ancient times the people and rulers of Kashmir would be very effectually secluded from aggressive forces. No rapacious neighbours would be strong enough to disturb their family nationality; and in their splendid climate, with a beautiful lake connecting their various settlements, it is far from unlikely that the Aryans in Kashmir may have presented a powerful, natural, and art-loving development, analogous to that which, about the same period, they were beginning to obtain in the favoured Isles of Greece. But, whether produced by natural or artificial causes — whether due to fate or to a short-sighted desire for land — the disappearance of the lake and the desiccation of the valley, which tradition assigns to the year 266 B.C., must have wrought a great change in their circumstances, associated as it was with the increase of the warlike mountain-tribes around. Gradually, the valley-plain would afford a more fertile and easily worked soil than the slopes of the mountains, which were soon forsaken for it. The primitive serpent-worship and the natural Vedic religion would be affected by the evil Brahminism of the plains of India; and this, again, had to struggle against the rising influence of Buddhism, which is unfavourable to warlike qualities. Tartar chiefs began to dispute the

kingdom with Hindú dynasties; fierce mountaineers in the Hindú Kúsh would greedily listen to rumours about the terrestrial paradise; and there would be the commencement of that state of hopeless vassalage which has condemned the Kashmiri to centuries of misery, and developed in his character its falsity and feebleness. Nothing more definite can be discerned of that early period except that the Kashmiris were a brave and warlike people; and that, even then, its women were famous for their beauty, as illustrated by the legend of the two angels Hárát and Márat, who were sent on earth by God to reform men by their example, but were ensnared by the beauty of a fair Kashmiri. Other countries are not without stories of the kind; but to Kashmir it was reserved to corrupt the reforming angels by means of a simple courtesan. Mermaids, too, there appear to have been in the lake — the beautiful daughters of the serpent-gods, before whom even Brahmins trembled and were powerless. With the Mohammedans there comes a more troubled era. After an ineffectual attempt in the end of the tenth century, Mohammed of Ghuzni conquered Kashmir in the beginning of the eleventh century; chiefs of Dardistan and kings of Tibet make incursions into it, and forcibly marry the daughters of its tottering Hindú monarchs; even distant Turkistan sends vultures to the prey; and the only heroism is displayed by Queen Rajpútani, the last of its Hindú sovereigns, who, rather than marry a usurping prime minister, upbraided him for his ingratitude and treachery, and stabbed herself before him. The sixth of the Moslem monarchs who succeeded and who reigned in 1396 A.D., was the ignorant zealot Sikander, nicknamed Bhútshikan or the Image-breaker, who devoted his energies to destroying the ancient architecture and sculpture of Kashmir, and succeeded only too well in his endeavours. In the next century reigned the Badshah or Great King, Zein-ul-abdin, who gave Kashmir its most celebrated manufacture, by introducing wool from Tibet and weavers from Turkistan, as also *papier-maché* work and the manufacture of paper. This extraordinary man reigned fifty-three years; he was a patron of literature, a poet, and a lover of field-sports, as well as a most practical ruler, and he gave the country a great impetus. This vantage-ground, however, was lost almost immediately after his death, as he had

foreseen, by the growing power of the native class of the Cháks, who soon rose to supreme power in Kashmir by placing themselves at the head of the national party. Under one of their chiefs the valley asserted itself nobly and victoriously against its external enemies; but this advantage was soon lost, through internal jealousies, enmities, and treachery; and a request for assistance offered by one of the Chák chiefs afforded Akbar the pretext for conquering the country and making it a part of the great Mogul empire.

On the way from Mártand to Achibal I saw the only serpent which appeared before me in Kashmir; but, before I could get hold of it, the wily creature had disappeared in the grass; and those who have closely observed serpents know how readily they do disappear, and how wonderfully the more innocuous ones, even the large rock-snakes, manage to conceal themselves from the human eye in short grass, where it might be thought that even a small snake could easily be detected. I have been instructed by Indian snake-charmers, who are rather averse to parting with their peculiar knowledge, and have tried my hand successfully on a small wild cobra, between three and four feet in length, so I speak with knowledge and experience on this subject; but this Kashmir snake I refer to eluded my grasp. It was only about two and a half or three feet long, and had the appearance of a viper; but I do not know what it was. The *ganas*, or *aphia*, is a species of viper which is said to be very dangerous, and is most dreaded by the people of the country. The latter name has suggested, and very properly suggests, the *ὄφις* of the Greeks. Serpents are scarce in Kashmir, and do not at all interfere with the great pleasure of camping-out in that country. There is more annoyance from leopards, especially for people who have small dogs with them; for the leopard has quite a mania for that sort of diet, and will not hesitate to penetrate into your tent at night in quest of his game.

Achibal and Vernag are two delightful places, such as no other country in the world can present; but their general characteristics are so similar that I shall not attempt to describe them separately. They resemble the Shalimar and Nishat Gardens, to which I have already alluded, but are more secluded, more beautiful, and more poetic. *Bal* means a place, and *Ash* is the satyr of Kashmir traditions.

Ver, according to Elmslie, is the name of the district in which the summer-palace is situated; but it is properly *vir*, which may be either the Kashmir word for the weeping willow (which would suit it well enough), or an old Aryan form for the Latin *vir*. On the latter supposition it would be the haunt of the man-serpents, and it is exactly the place that would have suited them in ancient or any times.

Both Achibal and Vernag were favourite haunts of our friend Jehángir, and of his wife Núr Jahán, the Light of the World. If that immortal pair required any proof of their superiority, it would be found in the retreats which they chose for themselves, and which mark them out as above the level of ordinary and even royal humanity. At Achibal, a spring of water, the largest in Kashmir, rises at the head of the beautiful pleasure-garden, underneath an overshadowing cliff, and this is supposed to be the reappearance of a river which disappears in the mountains some miles above. At Vernag, also, a large spring bubbles up in almost icy coldness beneath a gigantic cliff, fringed with birch and light ash that

Pendent from the brow
Of yon dim cave in seeming silence make
A soft eye-music of slow-waving boughs.

It is more specially interesting, however, as the source of the Jhelam or Hydaspes; and as I sat beside it on an evening of delicious repose, an old schoolboy recollection came to mind, and it was pleasant to find that if I could not venture to claim entirely the

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus,
yet I had escaped the Maurian darts, and had been enabled to travel in safety —

Sive per Syrtes iter æstuosas,
Sive facturus per inhospitalem
Caucasum, vel quæ loca fabulosus
Lambit Hydaspes.

From The Cornhill Magazine.
MISS ANGEL.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FOURDE FANTAISIE.

NEXT day Angelica, her blithest self, was at her work, and had made considerable progress before Queen Charlotte entered the gallery. Miss Kauffmann was painting eagerly, too eagerly indeed, thinking of what the queen would say,

of what she should say to the queen. Her mysterious little letter was still in her pocket. She longed to have her explanation over, but she seemed to hear something in her ears repeating,—"Wait with patience."

Angelica was getting very tired of patience. The queen sat with great dignity and affability, and passed the time asking Miss Kauffmann questions about herself, about the things she did, the way she spent her life. Every now and then the pages came, in their black court-dresses, bringing messages and retiring immediately.

Once the door opened, and a stout lady, with a red face, walked in, curtsied deeply, and waited for the queen to address her, which she did almost immediately.

"I sent for you, my good Schwollenberg," said Queen Charlotte, "that you should see what Miss Kauffmann is engaged upon. I was sure that she would appreciate a candid criticism upon my picture from so old and faithful a friend as yourself."

Poor Miss Kauffmann herself felt far less assured of this fact. The queen had acted in all kindness, knowing her attendant's peculiarity, and the disfavour with which she viewed anything in which she had had no voice.

"Yes, your Majesty," said Mrs. Schwollenberg, bustling forward, "I will see."

"It is necessary to know something of art to understand a picture in this early stage," said Angelica, and she looked up doubtfully. Mrs. Schwollenberg caught the look and the words and frowned.

"You make de eye so small," said she. "One need not be painters to see dat."

"Are you sure of the fact?" said the queen. "Perhaps, as Miss Kauffmann suggests, it is the effect of the unfinished painting."

"Oh, ver well," said Mrs. Schwollenberg. "It is as your Majesty choose. If your Majesty ask me, I answers; if not, I keeps my 'pinions to me."

Miss Angel's blue eyes twinkled a little maliciously. Mrs. Schwollenberg retreated, and the brush went steadily on.

Presently another messenger came in, and handed a folded paper to the queen, which she read, and then saying, "I beg your pardon, Miss Kauffmann," beckoned Mrs. Schwollenberg to her side. "Will you go to the king, and remind him, from me, that Count de Horn will be here a little before five o'clock?" she said in a low voice. "He has asked for a private interview. I will receive him

in the great gallery. I am always glad to welcome an old friend."

Mrs. Schwollenberg left the room. The message seemed simple and unimportant enough. Angelica sat paralyzed. What had she heard? She tried to go on painting, but her hand trembled. She tried to speak, but something in her throat rose and choked her words. Her heart throbbed and throbbed with strange passionate triumph.

"Yes, Count Frederick de Horn is a very old acquaintance of mine," the queen continued, half to herself, half addressing the painter. "He distinguished himself in the late war. He has come over on a special mission to the king."

"Oh, madam!" said Angelica, rather wildly.

The queen was preoccupied, and did not notice her agitation. After a moment's silence she spoke again. "Pray, Miss Kauffmann, if it is not disagreeable to you to answer, tell me is this rumour true that I hear concerning you and Mr. Reynolds, and am I to congratulate you upon your approaching marriage?"

Here was an opening. Did the queen suspect already?

"No, madam," said Angelica, faltering; "that is not true, but —"

"But there is some one else," said the queen, graciously; and as she spoke she glanced at Angelica's left hand, upon which her wedding-ring was shining.

"That ring tells a story, perhaps," said Queen Charlotte, gravely. "Since when is it the custom for young unmarried ladies to wear wedding-rings?"

Angelica blushed crimson; but what did it matter? He was come. The hour was come. Triumphant, palpitating, dazzled, she forgot everything save that the supreme moment had arrived. Here was the queen, august, all-powerful. Here was her hero close at hand. It seemed to her that she could hear his horses' feet in the courtyard below. With beating heart, with hands tremblingly clasped, she stepped into the great light of the window, and stood before the amazed Queen Charlotte.

"Madam, you have guessed all; your Majesty can read all hearts! Yes, it is true that my ring tells a story. Your clemency alone can make it a happy one."

The queen's look was scarcely encouraging. Queen Charlotte, as it is well known, had an aversion to extremes of feeling and vehemence of expression.

As for Angelica, no sooner had she

heard her own voice than she suddenly remembered her promise, all De Horn's warnings — remembered that she had not yet leave to speak, and the words died away upon her lips. She turned faint and giddy.

"You are ill," said the queen, rising.

"No, madam," said Angelica, recovering herself with a great effort. "Will your Majesty excuse me if I have for a moment forgotten my self-control?"

Dignified Queen Charlotte relaxes her stern frown — the lovely, imploring face before her is almost irresistible.

"I see you are much agitated," she said, "and I have little time to give you at this minute. You can wait in Mrs. Schwollenberg's apartment, and speak to me after the audience."

And, almost at that instant, once more the attendants entered, and Mrs. Schwollenberg herself returned, with another deep curtsy. Angelica hardly knew what happened, hardly heard what they all said. Did not some one tell her to wait, that Mrs. Schwollenberg would return?

Then they all went away, and she was left alone. Was he come? Was it thus they were to meet, as in some fairy tale, at the summit of prosperity and success?

Angelica's agitation was too great for her to keep quiet. Although she said to herself that all was well, some secret feeling almost overwhelmed her at times. A sudden terror had come after her passing conviction. At one moment she felt safe at the end of her troubles, the next instant seemed to terrify her, overwhelm her with terrors of every sort. She began pacing the room impatiently; she could scarcely endure the suspense. Presently it occurred to her that she might return into the tapestried chamber, from whence she could see the courtyard, see him descend from the carriage, and perhaps recognize her husband's liveries, if he had come in state, with his coach and servants in attendance.

She opened a wrong door somehow, and found herself in a dark and lofty lobby, vaulted, lighted by many windows, that all opened upon the great staircase, where pages were standing and people passing. Some servants came up the steps; a soldier standing by presented arms. Then a red-haired man dressed in black passed by, carrying his cocked hat under his arm; he looked up at a picture as he passed, and Angelica saw him very plainly. It was a face utterly unknown

to her. A secretary with papers followed, then two more servants in the well-known green liveries.

They swept along the marble and disappeared through a great doorway, which was not closed behind them. At the same moment Angelica came out to the head of the great staircase, and watched them walk away along the great gallery towards the inner room where the king was to receive them.

As the last person in the train disappeared, Angelica turned to one of the pages standing by. "Who was that?" she said.

The young man looked surprised at the unexpected apparition of a powdered lady coming out from the apartments unattended.

"That is the Swedish envoy, Colonel Count Frederick de Horn, on his way to an audience with the king," he answered, in an oracular voice, and then he turned away and went to join the others standing by the fire down below.

Frederick de Horn! She staggered, put her hand to her bewildered head, and shrank back through the door by which she had come out, into the room where she had been at work.

Was that *Frederick de Horn*?

It was some one who had taken the name? Some impostor, some wicked person. She did not know how the time passed; she stood petrified with a thousand thoughts, almost too painful to realize. Suspicions crowded upon her. She hated herself; she would *not* suspect. She waited, that was all she could do; waited until the door opened, and some one entered, not the queen, alas! but her fierce and fat attendant.

"Her Majesty bids you come in my rooms," said Mrs. Schwollenberg; "she is now with de count. She will come back to hear what you have to say. She will not be long. De count — I know what he comes for. De queen cannot help him. Prepare yourself, miss," and she gave a snort and looked at Angelica from head to foot; "I think I can guess it all what you have to say."

"Can you guess?" said poor Angel. "How can you guess?"

"I know many things," said Mrs. Schwollenberg. "Frederick de Horn, he often asks my advice. I have stayed at his castle at Hafvudsta. He makes a stupid marriage. He did not come to me then," said the malicious woman. "That is what happens when one is not particular; people are made fools of."

"What do you mean? Have you seen Count de Horn now?" persisted Angelica, wildly. "Why is he come? He is not the only Count de Horn? I myself know another who comes from Hafvudsta."

"Dere is no other," said the old woman, "only his little son. Countess de Horn was made a fool off, by a man who lived in de house and stole her papers and jewels, and forged his name. De count 'ave come to find him. Dat is von reason he is come," said Mrs. Schwellenberg. "I hope he will catch de tief, and 'ang him on de gallows."

Angelica turned with a face of horror, then suddenly flashed out:

"Silence, woman," she cried, stepping forward with a swift mad fury of indignation.

Mrs. Schwellenberg shrugged her fat shoulders, threw up her hands, and waddled out as hard as she could go, to tell the queen. She had spoken by the merest chance, but Angel turned sick and pale and cold, and gave a sort of wild cry; she understood it all now. Now it was all clear. Now she understood everything, the sense of something to be dreaded. Now she understood that poor enigmatical letter. Now she knew that she had dimly suspected him all along. She remembered his terror at the ball, his mysterious embarrassments and allusions. Some cruel truth had dawned upon her. *He*, her husband as she called him, was the impostor. Now—now she knew herself deceived, disgraced hopelessly—hopelessly. She felt as if the atmosphere were choking her—as if the castle with all its towers and walls was crushing her down—as if the one thing to do was to escape, to break away from this fatal spot.

To escape from it all, from the queen's gracious maddening condescension, from the little pages and round-eyed ladies in waiting, to be *herself*, silent, desperate, alone, with this terrible overwhelming revelation: this was the one idea which presented itself to Angelica's mind. A sort of state horror seemed to her to fill the room, to come round about her, closing in and suffocating her; she went to a window and madly tried to open it, but she wrenched the handle the wrong way in her agitation and hurt her hand. With a sort of low shuddering cry she turned away, and as she did so she caught sight of the picture of Queen Mary hanging grimly over the door, with its ghostly emblems of scaffolds and of parting prayers.

To die, she thought, only to die, that would be less hard than to be deceived, less hard than to deceive. She had deceived her father—she had meant no harm, she was justly punished now. Punished—she was disgraced, overwhelmed. It seemed to her for the first few minutes that there was no means, no possible way of living on from day to day for all the rest of her life, to face them all. How was it possible? She had mechanically taken up her cloak, and as she sought for an exit to the room she saw her face reflected white, ghastly white, in the looking-glass. She rushed to the door, flung it open and hurried down the gallery—anything to get away from this cruel place, where such grief had found her out. She left her work on the easel, her gloves lying upon the floor, her dream of happiness broken into a thousand shreds, all scattered and dispersed.

That little procession seemed branded on her mind: the envoy with his unknown face, the servants in their familiar livery.

The pages stared at her as she passed, but did not attempt to stop her. A porter stood by the outer door and she signed to him to open: her throat was too much parched for her to speak. She came out with a great sigh into the open air of heaven.

CHAPTER XXVII.

NOW FROM THE CAPITOL STEPS.

THEN she heard a chiming of bells, a humming of voices in the air. The people were passing from afternoon chapel, crossing the courtyard with its many old Tudor gates and the archways and inner courts. The old knights were returning to their houses, and creeping from their stalls, where they sat Sunday after Sunday enshrined in state, with heraldic flags waving above their heads. Angel felt inclined to seize one of them by the hand as he passed, and say, "Tell me is it true—is it all nothing, nothing?" The people were quietly coming out of chapel; peaceful prayers incarnate walking away in the shape of men and of women, some worn by time, all cruel, all indifferent to her woe. To avoid them the bewildered woman turned into the cloister: a great swell of organ-notes pursued her. The doors of St. George's Chapel were thrown wide open; she flew on, looking straight before her, with strange fixed crazed eyes. She had got into the cloisters, and in her confusion she ran twice round the inner court with its wooden

span of arch; then she made her way out, hurrying past a messenger from the queen, who had been sent to follow her and bring her back. Somehow in this blind flight she came to the steps that led from the kingly castle heights to the wide and subject world. She saw the great snow-streaked plain sweeping at her feet, and she longed in a mad bewildered way to leap forward and end it all. It was a strange wild experience in this bright and gentle life, one that scarcely belonged to her nature. Her nerves were quivering with a poignant shame, her heart was so heavy in her breast that it seemed to weigh her down, but her feet took her safe from habit. The town, with its streets and passengers, its toil of life, was spread down below; the people looking up may have seen the poor scared figure with the flying cloak coming headlong down the flight; then her head turned, she could hardly keep steady, for a moment. She was obliged to stop, to cling to the wall. This very difficulty distracted her. She reached the end of the flight safely somehow, and came out through the archway into the street. As Angel still hurried on down the middle of the road, she thought that people were looking at her. Some one stopped and spoke to her and asked if she were ill.

"Am I ill?" said Angelica; her own voice was quite shrill and strange. Then she heard other voices, and her name softly called in tones of commiseration, and without having seen that any one was approaching she found herself surrounded, alone no longer. An enclosing kindness seemed to have come between her and curious strangers: a home seemed to meet her there in that desolate street, a home alive with kind faces and voices and encircling arms. Four of the girls with whom she was living had come according to their wont, walking by couples up Windsor Street to meet their sisters returning from afternoon chapel. They had already met Patty and Alethea with their prayer-books advancing with the dispersing stream of chapel-goers, when the poor bewildered figure emerged from under the archway and came sitting towards them. They hardly knew her.

"Is it? . . . it is Angelica," said Decie, springing forward. They ran up to her with their gentle hurrying steps and came round her as she fell almost fainting into their arms: her head sank upon Alley's shoulder; Patty's kind arm was round her waist; Decie and Dosie stood shel-

tering her from the assembling bystanders.

It was like one of the stories from some old poet's song, or one of those allegories. Miss Angel liked to paint: the pitying maidens with their kind hearts and voices protecting the poor stricken lady in her forlorn distress. They did not ask what it was, but she told them then and there without preamble. "Oh! I have had a blow," she said, and she pressed her hand to her aching heart. "A cruel blow. I have done wrong — and yet there was no great wrong — and I am punished. Oh! punished and disgraced for all my life."

"What has happened?" said Decie.

"It is that queen — I know it," cried impetuous Kitty. "I wish she were —"

"Wait, Kitty," said Alethea, "she will tell us all;" and she encircled Angelica more closely with her arm, and they all moved forward together, leading their poor broken guest along the road.

Angel made no resistance, feeling safe in their custody. She was utterly broken down, utterly at an end of her strength. "I cannot keep this secret any longer," she panted forth at last. "This morning when I woke I thought I was married: look at my ring. It was a fortnight since he gave it me in our chapel. Now I know — now — that those we trust deceive, those we believe in are the first to turn against us; those who have promised to return come not. He promised he would come when he left me, but I have never seen him since, and now — now — I know the very name he gave me was not his own. I have seen the real De Horn, my husband is a liar. Trust no one — no one. Take warning by me."

"Oh! no, no, no!" cried Decie, the eldest of the sisters, speaking with unexpected life and passion, and suddenly striking some individual note among them all. "Do not fear to trust; none whom you truly love can really deceive; they sin against you, but they are yours — it is the law of life."

Dosie and Patty looked strangely at their sister. They knew why she exclaimed so passionately. Angelica was comforted for the moment.

"I pray that you are right: but is not mine a cruel story?" she said, with a wild sort of sob. "I know not what my fate is, if I am married or not married, or to whom I am pledged, or from whom I received my wedding-ring."

The girls murmured a sort of chorus of sympathy and encouragement.

"All will be explained. Father must take you home. He will make all straight for you," they said, soothing her, and they led her on, regardless of the wondering looks of the people.

As they passed across the bridge with its frozen ivy houses, they were forced to stand up against the low parapet, while a great coach with green liveries and footmen, dragged by four horses, clattered past on its way from the castle.

Angelica hid her face in her hands.

"That is the real De Horn," she whispered; her sobs broke out afresh, nor ceased till they reached the house. The young ladies almost carried her to her room, laid her down, spent and wearied upon the bed, brought lavender and bathed her temples.

What shall be said, for words are thorns to grief?

Withhold thyself a little, and fear the gods.

Their kindness was so great, their sympathy so tender and unobtrusive, that Angel felt comforted somehow, and at last, worn by her miserable tears, she fell into an exhausted sleep; from which she was only awakened by a messenger from the castle: the queen wished to speak with her again. But she was in no state to present herself before her gracious benefactress.

Good Dr. Starr himself returned in the coach which had been sent, with all explanations, and expressions of deep gratitude for favours received.

He came home disturbed indeed; but flattered by his reception. He had not repeated all Angelica's confidence; he had described her state, and dwelt upon her nervous, feverish condition. Until something more definite could be ascertained, he had, good man that he was, and the father of daughters, felt that it might be better for Angelica's future happiness that the story should not get abroad. He could, as he well knew, trust his girls' prudence. Jinny herself could be silent, when desired to be discreet.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

I KNEW THE RIGHT, AND DID IT.

ONE day soon after these events, Mr. Reynolds was painting in his studio, when he received a letter in an unknown writing:

"SIR,—May I intrude upon your valuable time, and request that you will come at your very earliest convenience

to Mrs. Angelica Kauffmann's. There is great trouble in the house, and your help and opinion will, I am convinced, prove invaluable to our poor friends, whom I feel myself scarcely competent to advise. Your obedient, faithful servant,

"W. M. STARR."

The painter went on for a few minutes painting the model before him. It was perhaps Kitty Clive, smiling and winsome; but after a few minutes he found he could not continue, and he made some excuse.

"Are you indisposed? have you had some distracting summons?" said the sitter.

"Yes, indeed," he answered; "it is one I cannot neglect."

Ten minutes later he was prepared to hurry off to Golden Square. But on his very door-step he met a tall, grave man, powdered and dressed in black, who introduced himself as the writer of the note.

It was Dr. Starr, who without preamble begged to be taken into a private room. Mr. Reynolds led him into the dining-room, and stood leaning against the marble chimney-piece as he listened to the story which Dr. Starr told briefly and clearly, and without much comment.

"I hear that the Swedish envoy has left a secretary behind him in London," said Dr. Starr, after he had briefly told the story. "I brought the lady up to her father this morning. I found poor Mr. Kauffmann in the most pitiable state. It seems that a priest came to him at breakfast-time, and revealed the whole plot. The man also hinted that for a consideration he could disclose still more. I am anxious to get back. I dread leaving these poor people without protection, at the mercy of those villains' revelations."

"But we assuredly had best make inquiries for ourselves," said Mr. Reynolds.

After a brief consultation Mr. Reynolds parted from Dr. Starr, and took the direct road to Lord W.'s house. Even if he were absent, as he feared, Lady Diana would give good advice, and she would befriend Angelica.

Lord and Lady W. were both absent from London; only Lady Diana was at home alone with the children. She sent them into the garden to play, and left her more congenial occupations of horn-book and story-telling to listen to Mr. Reynolds' revelations. She took it all in immediately.

"It is all true," she cried, flushing with anger. "I know it, I feel it. I have suspected it for some time past. We have been blinded, every one of us. Good heavens! She must have been married that very morning I met her. Go to her, Mr. Reynolds. I will follow; I will come to Golden Square and bring my friend, Sir John Fielding, with me, in less than an hour's time. He is a magistrate; he will know what to do."

"Let me go to him," said Mr. Reynolds; and then at her suggestion, he also walked off to the house of a certain Baron de Brandt, a Swede, settled in London.

It was late in the afternoon when Mr. Reynolds reached Golden Square. Old Kauffmann, who had been watching for him in the hall, admitted him in immediately. He was trembling, unshaved, unwashed; he caught hold of the painter's arm with his two brown hands.

"Oh, you are come at last!" he said. "I thought you were never coming. That fellow is up-stairs. I wrote to him; she insisted on it. He cannot explain himself; he cannot deny his impostures. My child is mad, is possessed," cried the old man, sinking down in a heap on the steps that led to the upper floor. "She has forgotten her careful training," he cried, wringing his hands; "the example I have set her, the friends who have honoured me in her; she has sacrificed her peace, her life, to an impostor."

"I fear it is too true. I have been making inquiries in several quarters," said Mr. Reynolds, gravely. "The real Count de Horn embarked at Dover yesterday, and left for Sweden. This man, whom we have all entertained, has assumed a name to which he has no right. I have applied for a warrant, and I have spoken to a magistrate, for there are now rumours of a previous marriage," said Mr. Reynolds, pacing the hall. "Lady Diana, to whom this villain had the audacity to propose in Venice, will help us to unravel his history."

"Come, come," cried the old man, with sudden energy, rising to his feet. "Let us confront him, monster that he is. He is up-stairs with my daughter. I would not have left them alone, but that it was her wish. You, you are a true friend," cried the old man, suddenly flinging himself into Mr. Reynolds' arms.

The Englishman, somewhat embarrassed, drew gently back. The old German, repulsed by him, clung to the banisters, broken and trembling. Mr. Rey-

nolds stood looking on, full of sincerest pity and concern, scarce knowing what to do or to say to comfort such sorrow. He himself was very pale, his bland lips were firmly closed; but what was his feeling compared to this?

Alas! he wondered, would it have been better had he trusted more to the instinct which had once led him to Angelica, which had touched him so keenly when she held out her hand, which was still existing somewhere in his secret heart, but kept under by his deliberate will. Would that he could now stretch out his hand and rescue her from her sea of trouble! Once more the mist came into his eyes, with some bitter pang of passing remorse. Was it indeed of her, or of himself and his own material interest, that he had thought when he left her that summer's day?

John Joseph, who was in tears, wiped them away in a cloud of snuff with his great coloured handkerchief, and assumed some dignity of bearing, as they entered the studio, into which the afternoon sun was blinding.

Then suddenly old Kauffmann gave an angry leap and rushed across the room. Mr. Reynolds stepped back ashamed and provoked beyond words or expression of words.

The two were in the window, their backs to the light. Angelica was standing holding to De Horn's arm, and looking up into his face. De Horn was speaking in a low voice. She seemed to have relented, to be forgiving all, to be listening to him, yielding quietly to his persuasions, looking forgiveness. Her nature was utterly feeble, unreasoning, unreliable, thought Mr. Reynolds, with mingled pity and scorn. With a sort of shriek old Kauffmann rushed up to her, and would have torn her away in his speechless indignation. Angelica turned: with one hand she still held by De Horn's arm, with the other she caught her father's angrily upraised hand.

"Listen, dearest," she said to the old man. "I wish you to know all. He has told me all. He loves me, indeed he does, and although he has deceived me in other ways, indeed he has not deceived me in that. He has shown me the letter you sent him this morning by the priest. It is a very cruel one, dear father. Have you forgotten the days when you yourself were young and loved and were loved?"

"Silence, unhappy girl," the old man cried. "Oh, for shame! Mr. Reynolds

is witness that I only meant to spare you. This man is an impostor, a lackey in his master's clothes, who dared to come into the presence of honest people, and to rob and to lie, and to deceive an old man and a helpless woman. He is married already. He is perjured. He —"

The words failed in his frantic agitation, and John Joseph could not go on. De Horn's face turned to an ashy paleness. He had not imagined that all would be so soon discovered; but for the moment in the presence of all these witnesses, he determined to put the best countenance he could upon it.

This false De Horn, seeing his one advantage, kept tight hold by the little hand that seemed alone to befriend him.

"You may call me what you will," he said, not without emotion; "but this lady is nevertheless my wife. She was married to me at the Catholic chapel by the priest whom you yourself saw. She went there of her own free will; her goodness induces her to overlook the wrongs I have done to her, to hold by the validity of the ceremony. . . . Come, my idol," he said, turning to her. "Let us leave this censorious country, where cruel things are said and offences imputed. I will protect you in future, and you shall never regret your confidence in me."

"Angelica!" shrieked the poor old father, flinging himself upon her and grasping her in his arms. "Are you mad? Do you hear? He is married already. Ask Mr. Reynolds. He is —"

"Leave her," cried De Horn, in a sudden black tempest of fury, trying to push off the old man, who stumbled and fell, perhaps feeling that it was expected of him to do so.

Mr. Reynolds came up greatly shocked.

Angelica, with a cry, started away from De Horn, and, kneeling by her father, raised his grey head on to her lap. He was not hurt. Seeing her face he relented and rose immediately. It was an agonizing scene for her — horrible, and most miserable — the most miserable of her life.

I think there is some saving grace in honesty of purpose, in truth of feeling, that helps people out of cruel passes that seem almost insurmountable at the time.

Angelica could not love De Horn, she knew him too little; but she had some strange feeling of loyalty towards him, and his wrong-doing could not change this. It seemed to her as if, having more to forgive made the link that bound

them even more close. As her father rose to his feet she too sprang up and stood with steady eye fixed on her husband, so she called him. The first accusation had seemed little to her in comparison to this last, that of his previous marriage.

Was he married? She could not, would not believe it. Mr. Reynolds could not mean that. "Oh, tell me," she said; "you owe me the truth. Do not be afraid; I will not desert you." Her tones were utterly sweet, and came from her very heart. "Are you already married? Am not I your wife?" She went up to him and put her gentle hand on his shoulder and looked at him fixedly with her two steadfast eyes.

"You are an Angel indeed," said the man, suddenly flushing up crimson, all touched and overcome by her confidence. "This is the truth: I have a Protestant wife in Sweden, but I myself am a Catholic, and my marriage with her has been disputed. We were only wedded according to Protestant rites. You, madame, are a Catholic, and the priest assured me that the ceremony was valid."

"The case had better be tried," said Mr. Reynolds, quietly. "I should think there would be little doubt of the verdict."

"The verdict would give her a most certain and effectual release from any promises she might have made me, were they ten times more valid," said De Horn, with a strange laugh. "Do you know what punishment is reserved in this country and in my own for persons convicted of bigamy?"

Mr. Reynolds flushed and bit his lips, and began to pace the room.

"Listen, listen!" cried old Kauffmann, suddenly laughing in a ghastly sort of way, and scuttling to the window, which he threw wide open. He was almost beside himself with grief and rage, and theatrical effects came to him naturally. He pointed to the window.

From the street below came hoarse voices, loudly shouting and calling the last dying speeches of some malefactors hung at Tyburn the day before.

"I know all that," said De Horn, quietly. "I have known it all the time, and if it had not been for this lady's presence, long ago I should have escaped the country."

Angel looked from De Horn to Mr. Reynolds, to whom she turned with a wild appealing glance. "You are my friend, are you not? You promised once, you will save him now," she said, putting

her hands to her ears to shut out those horrible voices.

Mr. Reynolds stopped in his walk and took out his watch. "As it is Miss Kauffmann's wish," he said, in a matter-of-fact voice, "it seems to me but fair I should tell you that I have appointed a magistrate to meet me here in half an hour, and that the door of the house is watched by two men down in the street below."

"You are a friend indeed," cried old Kauffmann, coming back from the window, trembling and croaking, and thoroughly unnerved. "Now, you impostor! Now is our turn."

"Tell me," said Angel, walking straight up to De Horn, "have you money to escape with? I have but ten pounds in the house."

"Are you a madwoman?" cried her father. But Mr. Reynolds now interfered. "I have brought money," he said. "I thought it might be wanted for a different purpose;" and then very stiffly, but not uncourteously, "I know not, sir, by what name to address you, but if you will accept my advice, and act upon this lady's wishes, you will take this sum and leave the country at once and forever. Count de Horn, whose name you have assumed, left for Sweden this morning; but, as I learned to-day, a secretary has remained behind with instructions to trace you and bring the authority of the law to bear on the offences of which you are accused."

The shadows were lengthening, the minutes seemed like hours: for one long, long moment no one spoke.

Then De Horn came up to Angel. "Remember that you have saved a lost soul," he said, hoarsely. "Henceforth I believe in utter goodness and generosity." Then to Mr. Reynolds, "You may call me by my real name, which is De Horn," he said. "My father gave me leave to bear it; my mother, Christine Brandt, is a servant in a village inn."

The all looked at one another—what is that? Angelica was the first to move; she was listening with alarm to every sound. "Now come," said she, simply taking his hand, then led the way downstairs and through her father's bedroom into the flagged court behind the house. It was a smutty and dismal spot, from which a door in the wall led into a shed, through which there was an issue into a back alley; country fields and places were not far distant in those days from the very heart of London itself. And De

Horn knew that he was safe. "I can get home by the hatch between this and Russell Square," he said.

"Don't go back to your lodging," said Angel. "Take my advice: for my sake, my peace of mind, fly at once."

He lingered, looking up and down, and then with a sort of burst: "There is only one way by which I can show you my sincerity," he said, "but one way in which I can merit your forgiveness for the wrong I would have done," he repeated. As he spoke he seemed some one else, whom Angelica had never seen before, some one almost common in tone, altered in manner, but stricken to truth and to reality of soul and feeling, not acting a part, but sincere in every breath and word. He looked at her with hard sad eyes; then he suddenly caught her in his arms. "I can only prove to you my deep gratitude by never seeing you more," he said. "I have no words when I think that these are the last I shall ever speak to you."

He pressed her to his heart, and before she could utter a word he was gone, running down the narrow alley. Some children were dancing in the sunset. She saw his long figure darting past them. He never looked back. He was gone. She crossed the shed and came into the stone court, and looked up at the windows of her own home: her old father was leaning out anxiously from her bedroom, and the light fell on his grey hair, and some birds flew straggling across the sky, and all the phantoms of the last few years came to meet her.

From The Spectator.

THE CHARACTERLESSNESS OF SERMONS.

THE correspondence on the subject of the trade in lithographed sermons has produced a very early crop of the kind of comments and criticisms on the subject of preaching which we usually hear a good deal later in the season. No doubt, for any loss which ordinary congregations suffer through hearing a piece of religious insipidity composed by a man who writes sermons at a shilling a piece, instead of another piece of insipidity by the man who finds buying sermons at a shilling a piece preferable to writing them, we might let the lithographed-sermon trade alone. The true objection to it is that it is a systematic deception, carried on by men who are seriously in-

jured by systematic deception, and not that, by the loss of dissertations from the persons who buy these sermons, the public are at all likely to suffer. As most people have had the sense to perceive, the true remedy is in some way to diminish the demand on the preaching-powers of ordinary curates, and even of ordinary incumbents, either by throwing the duty more than at present upon a selected class of preachers who have special gifts for preaching, or by encouraging a new vein of opinion among the clergy as to the fitness of not infrequently reading in the pulpit, and of course reading avowedly, the sermons of other men. The first remedy would necessarily, for a long time at least, be a very slight alleviation of the evil of insipid sermons indeed. Even if we established at once an order of preachers as able as possible, and made it a large order, the more thinly-populated rural districts would for a very long time get very little benefit from them,—at most, probably only for two or three Sundays in the year. It is the second remedy, then, to which we must look for the cure of the evil of insipid sermons, borrowed or original, so far as we can look for a cure at all. And here the objection usually made is that congregations are foolish enough to object, no matter how unreasonably, to the delivery of sermons known to be by other men, and to object so vehemently, that as a matter of fact they will stay away from church rather than go to hear a parson who, as they say, does not do his own work. It may be questioned whether, if the people who are foolish enough to think in this way did actually stay away from church, much harm would come of it. If they really prefer a bit of unmeaning morality, penned rather than composed by their own clergyman, to the most original and powerful sermons in the language—such sermons as John Henry Newman preached at Oxford or Mr. Robertson at Brighton—the chances are that they will not lose much by staying away from church. It is clear they cannot go for the devotional part of the service, or they would make less account of the sermon. And if they go for the sermon, and yet don't care whether what they hear is valid or not, so long as they have a sort of personal right in it, on the ground that it is mixed as a composing-draught for *them*, why a walk or a sleep is quite as likely to be of use to them as the privilege of taking the composing-draught in question. But though we be-

lieve this to be true, we are far from saying that there is nothing reasonable in the somewhat childlike feeling that a sermon not meant for us is not quite so good as a sermon prepared on purpose for us.

There is so much that is personal in all religious matters, that a congregation naturally attach more importance to what is said by a man whose character and whose life amongst them they know, and know in its religious aspects, than to what has been said by other men, however great, whose personality is more or less of a rumour to them. That is not, we think, altogether unnatural, and not even altogether unwise. At least, it is quite certain that the genuine speech of one who lives and works amongst us will usually have a greater and better because more living influence, on the whole, than the written words of one who is more or less of a mere name. But we believe it to be a complete mistake to suppose that another man's sermon need be so read as to leave it nothing more than the words of the writer. It may easily be so read, and so interpreted in parts by the reader, as to give it the full weight of the reader's influence, as well as that of the writer's. If there were not so much vapid conventionality in the pulpit, this would indeed be a comparatively easy matter. The difficulty of finding a subject on which he has something that it really interests him to say, of a kind to awaken the spiritual life of others, is the preacher's great difficulty. It does not follow that because he feels that difficulty keenly, he should feel any difficulty at all in so adopting, and showing his people that he brings home to himself, the teaching of some of his favourite sermons, as to take away all the deadening effect of mere reading. Nay, he may even gain a double advantage from mingling high authority with the attestation of his own personal and earnest adhesion. Nor, indeed, is there any reason why a man should always read what he actually agrees with. In relation to the sermons of really great preachers, there must almost always be room for doubt and divergence, as well as for hearty sympathy and admiration, and there can be no reason at all why such grounds for hesitating to accept, or even for rejecting particular conclusions, should not be stated as frankly as concurrence. The truth is, that our pulpit has been, and is, far too conventional. There is nothing clergymen are half so afraid of as being odd, or doing any-

thing at all unusual, which, of course, the reading of a sermon interspersed with comments by the reader of a kind to show the effect the sermon has had upon his own mind and heart, unquestionably at present would be. The objection stated by the *Times* of Saturday to young men's sermons appears to us to be conceived in the same conventional school. Young men's sermons may be quite as easily the better as the worse for being the sermons of young men. It is absurd to treat experience as the one and only *sine quâ non* for the power to give good moral and spiritual counsel. Experience tells both ways. It enormously increases, of course, the insight of men who really do know the cunning of the heart. But it also blunts very much the sense of uneasiness excited by all habitual sins, errors, and artificialities, and leads men to acquiesce in what they have always been accustomed to as if it were a law of nature, instead of a mere convention of human life. We feel very little doubt that young men's sermons might be quite as useful as older men's sermons,—other things being equal,—were there but in our religious services a little less of that terrible conventionality which now imprisons both the hearers and the preachers within its own whimsical rules of propriety. There is nothing for which the young have a greater genius than for admiration; and were young preachers only allowed, whenever they cannot find time to write their own sermons, to introduce their people to one which they themselves thoroughly admire, not without briefly giving the reasons for their admiration, and recounting some of the thoughts it has brought them, we should get some good out of their enthusiasm, without taxing them so severely as we now do. It is the impersonality of printed sermons,—the feeling that they don't come from the pastor before them, but from somebody else unknown,—which produces the chilling effect which they always seem to have on congregations. But that sense of impersonality would, we believe, be entirely removed by a very few sentences indicating the relation the sermon in question had really held to the mind of the reader, and the influence it had had upon his thought. Dr. Newman's or Dr. Robertson's thought would not be less, but more vivid than the ordinary incumbent's or curate's, if with it there was evidence

produced that it had not only entered but possessed the reader's nature. If a clergyman seems to his people the mere conduit-pipe for another and unknown voice, it is perhaps not unnatural that they should feel their interest weak; but if instead of being the mere conduit-pipe, he shows his people that the life and belief in him have been to some extent moulded by that voice,—so far from their interest being weakened, it would, we suspect, be greatly strengthened by that experience. Clergymen little know how much more interesting is any evidence they may on rare occasions give of the influences which have affected their own spiritual nature, evidence, for instance, of their favourite authors and poets, and of the habitual direction of their own thoughts on critical subjects, than the conventional platitudes which seem to have in them nothing of the human being who utters them. The pulpit, instead of concealing the life of the man who speaks in it, as it too often does, ought to reveal it, and nothing reveals it more effectively than a frank disclosure of the thoughts and feelings which have had the greatest charm for the moral and spiritual nature of the preacher. Of course all we have said assumes that there is a vivid moral and spiritual life in the preacher to reveal,—which is often far from true. But where it is not true, there is no remedy possible for the misfortune that the preacher has undertaken a career for which he is wholly unfitted, and which, more than any other career, needs men who have a special aptitude for it. Still, even clergymen who have a very real moral and spiritual life, waste half the beneficial influence they might exert by a conventional reserve, which in the pulpit more than anywhere is out of place. Reserve is a luxury in which many of us, perhaps, indulge too much; but certainly it is one in which men who enter the pulpit, forfeit, in some measure at least, their right to indulge. If a clergyman having, as he ought to have, the deepest possible moral and religious convictions, conceals from his people the sort of influence which these convictions exercise over him, he voluntarily throws aside the greatest of all instruments for diffusing these convictions. What the pulpit wants is more freshness, and less conviction; more character, and less formula; more freedom, and less fear.



